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Israeli Druze to be identified as Arabs

HAIFA, Israel (AFP) — Tens of thousands of Druze won the right to be identified as Arabs after a sheikh and his son set a legal precedent with an Israeli court ruling. Legal officials said Monday. Sheikh Jamal Maadi and his son Fuad, from the northern Israeli village of Yarka, are members of the Druze sect, considered by Israel as a national minority separate from the Arabs and so obliged to do military service. They won their case last week in Haifa. Sheikh Maadi led a campaign with the backing of an Israeli civil rights group against the interior ministry's refusal to change the term "Druze" which has been stamped on all official documents since 1957. A large part of the 30,000-strong Druze population in Israel refer to themselves as Arabs of the Druze religion, a branch of Islam that believes in reincarnation. They all speak Arabic. Another 20,000 Druze live on the Golan Heights, which Israel seized from Syria in 1967 and annexed in 1981.

Jordan Times

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Pakistan police detain 13 Egyptians for questioning

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan police have detained 13 Egyptians for questioning after Sunday's bombing at Cairo's embassy in Islamabad that killed 15 people and wounded more than 60. Interior Minister Nasserullah Bahar said on Monday.

He told Reuters that the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) police had detained seven Egyptians at Lahore airport and six at Karachi airport on Sunday night and on Monday morning.

They are being questioned at the airports and will be allowed to leave after "screening," he said.

All of them had come to Pakistan to attend Islamic religious conventions, he said.

"We don't want any terrorists to leave the country in the garb of invitees to these conventions," Mr. Bahar said.

"Whosoever is a suspect will be detained and interrogated. We will screen them."

Mr. Bahar said the detained Egyptians had attended a convention of the right-wing Jamaat-ul-Islami party in Lahore, capital of Punjab province, on Nov. 8 and a three-day convention of the Tablighi Jamaat (Preaching Party) at the nearby town of Raiwind last week.

Meanwhile, Egyptian investigators sifted through the destroyed Egyptian embassy in Islamabad Monday.

"A six-man Egyptian team is inspecting the site and looking for clues," said a Pakistani official standing outside the embassy. At least 15 people were killed and over 60 wounded in Sunday's blast.

"They will complete their work today and we will start demolition tomorrow," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

The Egyptian investigators were part of a 15-man team sent from Cairo on Sunday to assist Pakistani authorities.

Police sources said that Arab militants were the prime suspects. Pakistan ordered the militants to leave in 1993 after several Arab states complained that groups were using Pakistan as a base for subversion in their home countries.

At that time some militants, including Egyptians, Saudis and Lebanese, fled the northwestern city of Peshawar into nearby Afghanistan, a police source said, adding that some Arabs could be still living in an Afghan refugee camp east of Peshawar.

Egypt and Pakistan signed

Sharif Zeid condoles Sedki

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday sent a cable of condolences to Atef Sedki over the victims of a bomb blast at the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad Sunday which killed 15 people and injured 60 others.

The prime minister also expressed his government's condemnation of the terrorist attack and reiterated Jordan's firm and principled stand to fight terrorism in all its forms.

An extradition treaty last year but no extraditions have since been announced.

In Cairo, three Islamist groups seeking to topple Egypt's government have claimed responsibility for the attack, the bloodiest on an Egyptian target abroad for many years.

The first claim came from Gamaa Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group) and was followed by others from Jihad (Holy Struggle) and the International Justice Group.

Gamaa failed in June in an attempt to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. Mr. Mubarak has condemned the embassy bombing as an "evil crime."

Of the three groups which claimed the bombing officials in Cairo are focusing on "the International Justice Group" as the likely culprit, security sources said Monday.

The sources, who asked not to be named, pointed out that the "International Justice Group (IJG) was the only organisation to claim the killing (a week ago) of Egypt's trade representative in Geneva."

"It seems the IJG has continued its attacks against Egyptian interests abroad," he said.

The IJG claimed Sunday's bombing in a fax to an international news agency.

The security source discounted the Jihad claim, saying the group "is no longer present in Pakistan or in Afghanistan, unlike the Gamaa."

The IJG is most likely "a branch of the Gamaa and not a splinter group from it," the sources said, noting that the IJG fax called for the "immediate release" of two Gamaa leaders.

The group called for the release of blind Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the Gamaa's spiritual leader held in a U.S. prison, and the Gamaa "spokesman" Talaat Fuad Qassem, who has vanished since being arrested by Croatia in September.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said Pakistan will pay the bill for rebuilding the embassy in Islamabad, a heavily diplomatic enclave, previously considered a secure haven for foreigners.

Pakistan's official news agency said the death toll rose to 15 when an Egyptian diplomat died in hospital on Sunday night.

Officials said earlier 14 people had died, including five Egyptian embassy staffers, two of them diplomats. The others included seven Pakistanis, an Afghan and a person of unknown nationality.

The interior ministry has set up an inter-ministerial inquiry committee due to report to the government within a week.

Accounts varied as to how the suspected suicide bomber managed to get inside the embassy compound.

A smaller explosion a minute or so before the main blast may have been a grenade hurled at guards at the gate or a decoy.

"According to the details available so far it was a terrorist act apparently perpetrated by a suicide bomber who may have blasted his way through the gate and set off a high explosive device in a pick-up van," Foreign Minister Asef Ahmad Ali said.

Mr. Babar said the attack could have been carried out by individuals known to embassy guards.

Mr. Babar said police had found the engine and chassis of a double-cabin van they believed was used in the attack, adding: "I think we will get to the terrorists."

Pakistan has vowed to trace and punish the culprits. "I hang my head in shame that we failed to provide security to the embassy," Mr. Babar told the senate (upper house) on Sunday.

The United States, France and Jordan are among other countries that have condemned the attack.

In Washington, a White House spokesman said: "The United States stands ready to work with the governments of Pakistan and Egypt to help determine those responsible for this crime and bring them to justice."



GRATITUDE: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday received at the Royal Court Dr. Khalil Abbad, president of the Arab Society for Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, who presented to the Regent the shield of a Jordanian Arab conference on physiotherapy held in Amman last April. Dr. Abbad paid tribute to the Regent for chairing the conference and for his encouragement to the physiotherapy centres in the Kingdom. The April conference decided to choose Amman as the headquarters for the society in view of the Jordanian government's continued support for physiotherapy services. Jordan has 12 physiotherapy centres in different governorates and two others are being set up on the Dead Sea coast and in Aqaba. The director of the Regent's office, Michael Hamarneh, attended the meeting.

Sharaa describes Peres as man who wants peace

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq Al Sharaa on Monday predicted progress in the deadlocked Syrian-Israeli peace talks saying Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres was "a man who wants peace."

"Peres is different from Rabin in the sense that he works really for peace," Mr. Sharaa said in an interview published Monday by As Safir newspaper.

"Peres considers that peace is more important than elections," Mr. Sharaa said in reference to the Israeli polls set for November 1996.

As Safir said it conducted the interview on Saturday as U.S. envoy Dennis Ross arrived in Israel to seek ways to revive the deadlocked talks.

"Peres is a man who wants peace, comprehensive peace, and this of course is encouraging and positive but the question is whether he will be able of achieving a comprehensive peace," Mr. Sharaa said.

Mr. Peres should continue the peace process and work "faster" than before.

"He has no other choice and no room among the (Jewish) fundamentalists who don't believe in him," Mr. Sharaa said.

The negotiations have stalled since June when the two countries failed to make progress on security arrangements to accompany an Israeli pullout from the Golan Heights.

Israel wants to place early warning stations on the Golan, which it conquered in 1967 and annexed in 1981, but Syria prefers air surveillance.

"We refused an early warning station (on the ground) because it violates sovereignty and contradicts the principle that security should not be made at the expense of another country," Mr. Sharaa said.

"An early warning station means technically a position for troops and everything else it entails, and will allow the Israelis to go in and out as they please," he said.

Mr. Sharaa, who said Mr. Ross visited Israel to brief Mr. Peres on the negotiations with Syria because Mr. Rabin used to keep him in the dark, expected the U.S. mediation role to change.

"Clinton can speak to Peres in an influential way whereas he could not do that with Rabin who was the one who influenced the American president," he said.

But he said a meeting of Syrian and Israeli foreign ministers, which Israel is hoping for, was "not up for discussion yet."

"We still don't know the talks will continue but what we know is that we reject any step needed by Israel which does not agree with our convictions. We will give our people nothing less than full rights, sovereignty and dignity."

Mr. Sharaa also defended earlier statements that Mr. Rabin's death opened a window of opportunity, which triggered much criticism in Israel.

"No one rejoices in death. Even if someone who is not liked... dies, people remember his good deeds and forget the rest," he said.

"Sometimes enemies meet one another at a crossroads of mutual interest and this is what is happening today. There is a chance in Israel to make progress towards peace," he added.

Syria will play its role to persuade Lebanese guerrillas to lay down their arms after peace is signed and Israeli troops leave Lebanon, Mr. Sharaa said.

(Continued on page 7)

Peres reiterates Israel's commitment to peace

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Shimon Peres, the interim Israeli prime minister, on Monday strongly reiterated his country's commitment to the peace process and hailed a new association agreement with the European Union (EU) as an important contribution to stability in the Middle East.

With the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, Israel had lost its "captain for peace," Mr. Peres told a press conference after the signing of the new accord, one of a new wave of partnership accords with which the EU is seeking to deepen economic and political ties to its Mediterranean region.

"But we have and we shall continue."

Nobody had forced Israel to the negotiating table, he reminded the audience. "We did it because we don't want to dominate another people against their wish. It was a pure moral choice."

Mr. Peres went on to underline the importance of economic development in the region — an objective which the EU's new Euro-Mediterranean strategy encompasses.

"The peace process has thus far been mostly bilateral. The next step is to cement

the region as a whole into the kind of community you have in Europe."

The economic development of the regime was also vital to the success of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza, Mr. Peres said. "Once we no longer dominate another people we hope that poverty will not replace us in domination."

Spanish Foreign Minister Javier Solana echoed Mr. Peres' comments, calling the new deal "a major contribution to building up a Euro-Mediterranean area based on peace, stability and prosperity."

Mr. Peres also reiterated Israel's desire to make peace with Syria although he admitted that Damascus' failure to deliver condolences on the death of Mr. Rabin had been a setback.

"If it does not have a diplomatic consideration, there is at least a human consideration," Mr. Peres said, adding that Palestinian grief at Rabin's death had "done so much more in favour of peace than any declaration."

The association accord with Israel is the second of its kind to be signed by the EU following a similar deal with Tunisia earlier this year. An accord with Morocco was in-

stalled last week.

Ross briefs Peres

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross talked Mr. Peres through the labyrinth of the stalemate Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

The two men met late Sunday for three hours of intensive talks, after signals from Syria that it was ready to resume the negotiations which ground to a halt five months ago.

The U.S. State Department Middle East coordinator "immersed" Mr. Peres in all the details of the on-off negotiations, following the assassination of Nov. 4 of Mr. Rabin, the Jerusalem Post reported.

A senior U.S. official told the paper: "Until now Peres was briefed by Rabin but not immersed. This is why such talks are necessary."

The only way for Mr. Peres to judge how to proceed with Damascus was to be exposed to every detail of the talks, he said.

In a change of direction from Mr. Rabin's leadership, Mr. Peres has said he wants to discuss the full range of issues surrounding an eventual peace treaty.

(Continued on page 7)

Atlantis returns to Earth

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (AFP) — The U.S. space shuttle Atlantis returned to Earth Monday following an eight-day mission during which it docked with the Russian space station Mir. The shuttle and its five-member crew touched down at 1702 GMT at the Kennedy Space Centre landing strip. "Welcome back to Earth, congratulations to you for the successful mission," the control centre at Cape Canaveral told the crew. The touchdown was originally scheduled for 1731 GMT. The ship blasted off for space Nov. 12. Atlantis separated from Mir early Saturday, after three days of test runs for missions on a future space station, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration said. The flight to Mir was the second of five such planned voyages. The two craft linked up Wednesday some 392 kilometres above the Earth, bringing the station a 4.5-tonne Russian-built docking module, as well as supplies, equipment and two new solar panels. The module, a five-metre-long tunnel, will be used for all the dockings with Mir to take place before the end of 1997.

Queen Elizabeth hosts King Hussein, Queen Noor

LONDON (Petra) — Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor were Monday the guests of honour at a luncheon hosted by Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace to celebrate King Hussein's 60th birthday. The lunch was attended by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath, Queen Elizabeth's husband Prince Philip, the prince of Wales, Prince Charles, Prince Edward, the Duchess of Kent as well as British Prime Minister John Major and Mrs. Major.

Bosnia talks inch on

DAYTON (Agencies) — The United States set aside a Monday deadline and continued Bosnia peace talks on an "hour by hour" basis here because negotiators believe it is worth the effort, an American official said.

"We'll take it hour by hour at this point," said the official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity. He said it was unclear if Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who intervened urgently in the negotiations on Saturday, would return to Washington, D.C. from Dayton on Monday as planned.

The official, who is considered authoritative, did not rule out a partial peace agreement in case the Bosnian rivals — Muslims, Serbs and Croats — cannot achieve the comprehensive plan the United States is seeking. But "it is not what we're trying to get" and the elements of a comprehensive deal are there to be agreed upon, he said.

The United States on Saturday set a 10:00 a.m. EST (1500 GMT) deadline by which it said the Balkan leaders negotiating at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base here must make the choice for peace or continued war.

But employing a baseball analogy, the official said that after 22½ hours of straight negotiating that ended early on Monday, the talks had "gone into extra innings (and) we're just going to take it hour by hour" with no set deadline.

While acknowledging he could not cite any progress in those negotiations, the official said of the Balkan rivals: "We want to let them give it their best shot. If we thought that there was no possibility of moving forward we would have packed our bags..."

Meanwhile, amid signs of growing pessimism with the talks, White House spokesman Michael McCurry said President Bill Clinton was standing by and was ready to travel to Ohio if necessary to "help conclude a settlement."

Mr. Clinton was being regularly briefed by officials at this military base on the state

of play in the marathon talks which have deadlocked over how Bosnia is to be partitioned between the Muslim-Croat federation and the Serbs.

They could go on until late in the day Monday, a senior administration official said in Washington.

But they would not go on beyond then as both Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and his Serbian counterpart, Slobodan Milosevic, had announced they intended to leave in the evening, he added.

Mr. Christopher, who returned early from Japan to mediate in the talks over the weekend, kept negotiations going overnight until 5:30 a.m. (1030 GMT) Monday, State Department officials said here.

There was no report of progress when the talks were suspended to allow participants to rest for three hours, but the fact that negotiations then resumed indicated that the United States was still hopeful of achieving a breakthrough.

On Sunday, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns issued an ultimatum to the Balkan leaders, saying the time for talk had ended and they now had to make or deal or return home to war.

The talks, he said, would end at the latest Monday at dawn and a media "event" would then be held, either to initial a peace accord or to explain the reasons for the conference failure.

But the deadline came and went with no indication of when a decision might be expected.

A State Department official said only that the Bosnian and Serbian presidents, along with Croatian counterpart Franjo Tudjman, who returned to the talks Sunday night, had "not yet reached agreement on the core issues," involving exchange of territory.

A source close to the talks said an agreement had been virtually finalised Sunday but was called into question when

(Continued on page 7)

Jerusalem beginning Nov. 29," Mr. Kamal said.

Mr. Abdul Meguid said last week that the Arab countries would make a diplomatic offensive at the U.N. against the US Congress decision in late October to move the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by May 1999.

The Palestinian Authority has called for an emergency ministerial meeting at the league headquarters in Cairo, but Palestinian finance "minister" Mohammad Nashashibi has said such a session requires "more consultations."

Israel annexed east Jerusalem soon after occupying it in 1967 declaring the holy city its unified capital. But the international community has never recognised the annexation and only two nations have moved their embassies to Jerusalem.

The Palestinians want east Jerusalem as the capital of a future state.

Jerusalem's status is to be discussed by Palestinian and Israeli negotiators in final status talks concerning the Palestinian territories due to begin in May 1996.

Other possible Arab responses to the U.S. Congress decision, such as "an Arab mini-summit or an emergency meeting of Arab foreign ministers, depends on the results of the U.N. General Assembly's discussion of

League to contest U.S. Congress stand on Jerusalem at U.N.

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab states will present to the U.N. a draft resolution underlining that East Jerusalem is Israeli-occupied territory in response to a U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. embassy to the holy city, the Arab League said Monday.

League head Esmat Abdul Meguid has asked the pan-Arab body's mission to the UN General Assembly to submit the draft "reaffirming that East Jerusalem is part of the Arab territory occupied by Israel in 1967," a League official said.

League deputy Secretary General for Palestinian Affairs Said Kamal told the press that the draft confirms that U.N. Resolution 242 applies to the city's eastern sector.

Security Council Resolution 242, passed in 1967, calls on Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied during the war.

FIS ready to talk to Zeroual

PARIS (Agencies) — Algeria's outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said on Monday it was prepared to discuss with President Liamine Zeroual a peaceful settlement to the country's bloody civil strife.

Five days after Mr. Zeroual was elected president, exiled FIS leader in Europe Rabah Kebir said in a written interview with Reuters the FIS regarded him as the de facto power but added: "Mr. Zeroual is certainly a valid negotiator to lead the talks on the side of the effective power."

"FIS is ready for a global solution negotiated between the effective power and opposition, a solution that could lead to peace and stability," Mr. Kebir said.

He demanded that Mr. Zeroual release political prisoners, including FIS leaders, so that all parties could consult their leaders and militants.

Mr. Kebir, who lives in Germany, said it was too early for the FIS to disclose its negotiating proposals.

"FIS proposals will be the result of consultations between its executive and militants," he said.

Mr. Zeroual was elected president last Thursday with an official 61.3 per cent of the vote in the first poll since a cancelled 1992 general election that the FIS was poised to win. About 50,000 people have since been killed in civil strife in Algeria.

Opposition leader escapes assassination

Algerian opposition leader Khaled Bensmain, head of the Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA), survived an assassination attempt over the weekend, his party said Monday in a statement.

An unidentified man opened fire Saturday on Bensmain while he was visiting the house of his father, who had just died, at Théniet El Had in the Tissemsilt region, 100 kilometres southwest of Algiers, the statement said.

A party official told AFP that Bensmain escaped un-

harm.

The MDA of former president Ahmad Ben Bella is one of the eight signatories to a "national contract," signed in Rome in January, by opposition groups which backed a boycott of Thursday's polls.

The coalition — which also includes the banned FIS and Socialist Forces Front (FFS) — also wants to set up a transition government, including members of the opposition, to prepare for free elections.

Embarek Mahiou, the FFS's national finance secretary, was murdered in Algiers along with his cousin Farid Nov. 4.

"Those who are nostalgic for violence are benefiting from total impunity," the MDA statement said.

"The political militants cannot let themselves be taken one by one, and be eliminated physically, without denouncing the incompetence of the authorities, the only ones empowered to guarantee the defence of people and their goods," the statement said.

Meanwhile, Algerian security forces have foiled a series of attacks by the ultra-radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA) on Algeria's power utilities to disrupt the presidential elections, the independent daily El Watan said.

However, power supplies were sabotaged in the regions of Tiaret, Elida and Bejaia, forcing voting centres to delay their opening until around midnight, the newspaper reported.

"From a reliable source, it appears that several days before Nov. 16, GIA statements issued a call to sabotage a maximum of electrical installations throughout the territory. These were intercepted in certain towns," the newspaper said.

The terrorists counted on gaining entry to the power stations to sabotage," said El Watan, adding that several arrests took place.

Thursday's presidential polls, which took place under massive army security, were marred only by several isolated attempts by armed Islamic groups.



BODYGUARD UNDER GUARD: An Egyptian policeman leads a French bodyguard (left) of Prince Turki Ben Abdul Aziz, the brother of Saudi King Fahd, to his cell in a Cairo courthouse Sunday. The Frenchman, identified only as Bernard, and an American bodyguard were arrested for allegedly severely beating up two Egyptians at the hotel where the prince has been living for almost four years (AFP photo)

Big Bird to help cross divide between Israelis, Palestinians

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel and Qatar have agreed in principle an unprecedented deal for the first flights between the Jewish state and a Gulf Arab country, an official said Monday.

The director of civil aviation Menahem Sharon told AFP that the two countries had reached an "understanding" in talks in Qatar for two weekly round-trip charter flights between Doha and Tel Aviv in the coming weeks.

But it had not yet been signed because of outstanding "technical problems."

"We decided two things, to establish some beginnings of aviation links and basic rights such as using our airports for emergencies and for humanitarian reasons," he said.

"Then we also decided on two weekly flights from Doha to Tel Aviv for pilgrims wanting to visit the Holy Land," State radio said Monday that Saudi Arabia had agreed to allow Qatari planes heading for Tel Aviv to cross its air space.

Israel is hoping its flights will win a similar authorisation in the future.

Qatar also has to find a third country to represent its interests in Israel as the two countries do not have diplomatic relations.

Mr. Sharon said the fore-

Israeli official: Two weekly Doha-Tel Aviv flights soon

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Iran, UAE foreign ministers may meet in Qatar on island dispute

TEHRAN (AFP) — The foreign ministers of Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) may meet soon in Qatar to resume talks on the three disputed Gulf islands, the official IRNA news agency said Monday.

Iranian and UAE experts are currently holding talks on the strategic islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb in Qatar's capital, Doha, in the first such negotiations since September 1992 when a session in the UAE broke up without agreement.

The meeting, which started Saturday, is to set an agenda for an "upcoming meeting" between Iran's Ali Akbar Velayati and UAE's Sheikh Hamdan Bin Zayed Al Nahyan in Doha, IRNA said.

Iran had been insisting until now for a meeting in Tehran to return for the last one held in Abu Dhabi three years ago.

Abu Dhabi has demanded a comprehensive negotiation on all three islands, while Tehran is ready to discuss only Abu Musa, which had been jointly administered by the two countries until dispute erupted in 1992 after the UAE accused Iran of trying to annex the island.

Iran has so far maintained that its sovereignty over the three islands, at the entrance to the Gulf through which one-fifth of the world's crude oil is shipped, are not negotiable but has called for bilateral talks to remove "misunderstandings."

Iran took over the islands in 1971 before the UAE was formed.

The Iranian daily Akhbar on Monday described as a "gesture of goodwill" Iran's acceptance to hold the talks in Doha rather than Tehran.

It however, urged UAE leaders to "clarify their position and their objectives" before Mr. Velayati decides to make a trip to Doha.

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Kurdish conflict can be resolved through federations—PKK

DUBAI (AFP) — The entire Kurdish conflict can be resolved if Turkey, Iraq and Iran agree to federations granting Kurds some control over their own affairs, the leader of Turkish Kurd separatists said in an interview on Monday.

"The Kurdish question can be resolved by establishing federal systems in Turkey, Iraq and Iran within a global federal framework in the Middle East," Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan told Al Hayat newspaper.

Mr. Ocalan omitted to mention Syria, which also has a Kurdish minority and controls the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon where PKK fighters receive training and where the interview was carried out.

The Marxist-Leninist PKK has been waging war against the central government in Turkey since 1984 "because the government rejects the establishment of a Kurdish state in the country's south," said Mr. Ocalan, who

is also known as Apo.

"The existence of a Kurdish entity in northern Iraq within an Iraqi federation is a solution which is as good for Baghdad as it is for the (Iraqi) Kurds," Mr. Ocalan told the Arabic-language daily distributed in Dubai.

"Federalism is also a solution for the Iranians," Mr. Ocalan said. "Without federalism, Iran will not be able to play a role in the region."

Mr. Ocalan also said the PKK was ready to "put down weapons if the United States and Europe take the initiative to find a peaceful settlement to the Kurdish question in Turkey, under a federation inside the country's borders."

On Oct. 20, Mr. Ocalan said in a letter to U.S. President Bill Clinton that the PKK was not necessarily seeking to secede from Turkey.

"We are ready to examine any solution which will protect our identity, including federal arrangements like those in the United States," he said in the letter also published by Al Hayat.

Jewish group complains to Mubarak of 'anti-Semitic Egyptian newspapers'

CAIRO (R) — An American Jewish group complained to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Monday over what it called crude and intense anti-Semitism in the Cairo press.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) said Egyptian papers frequently used "anti-Semitic stereotypes reminiscent of Nazi propaganda" to criticise Israel, despite 16 years of peace between the two countries.

"We shared with the president our concern as Jews as to the nature of anti-Semitic

writings and caricatures and cartoons in this country," ADL Director Abraham Foxman told reporters after meeting Mr. Mubarak.

Mr. Foxman has led a seven-member ADL delegation on a tour of the Middle East since the Nov. 4 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Mr. Foxman said the group had found little difference between the Egyptian government press and Islamic opposition papers in their treatment of Jews.

He said the pro-Islamist Al

Shaab paper accused Jews of "spreading diseases and injecting Palestinian detainees with AIDS-infected blood, while in Al Ahran, the government press, editorials describe Jews as 'forgers,' murderers of the prophets and guilty of all evil and malice."

In an official report handed to Mr. Mubarak, the ADL said: "It is clear that President Mubarak has at best taken a hands-off policy towards this issue."

But Mr. Foxman told reporters Mr. Mubarak asked

him at the meeting to declare publicly that he totally rejected anti-Semitism.

"We walked away with his (Mubarak's) affirmation and his strong condemnation of anti-Semitism whether it be abroad or in this country," he said.

Egyptian reporters defended some of their colleagues cited in the ADL report and a heated row broke out when one journalist said the articles and cartoons were not anti-Semitic but specific criticisms of Israel.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq parliament speaker died in Amman

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq's Parliamentary Speaker Saadi Mahdi Saleh died in an Amman hospital on Sunday after struggling for several months against an incurable illness, the news agency INA and Jordanian officials said. Mr. Saleh, in his 50s, was speaker of the Baath Party which has ruled Iraq since 1968. He was hospitalised in Jordan more than six months ago, suffering from an "incurable illness," INA said, without specifying the exact nature of his ailment. Jordanian officials said he died the same day at Al Hussein Medical Centre in Amman and his coffin draped with an Iraqi flag was repatriated after a ceremony in which MPs took part. Paying tribute, INA said Mr. Saleh's death was "an enormous loss of a great Iraqi leader who was faithful to the principles of the party." In mid-October, Mr. Saleh sent a message of congratulations from hospital in Amman to President Saddam Hussein who won another seven years in power in a nationwide referendum. Saddam has often praised the speaker as a "militant who is sincere and faithful to the principles of the Baath Party."

'Peres should use doubles'

HAIFA, Israel (AFP) — Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres should use doubles — like Iraqi President Saddam Hussein — to thwart attacks on his life, the head of a private security firm said in a letter published Monday. Solo Leibovitch wrote to the cabinet office saying "this subterfuge could be extended to most government ministers to avoid any more murders," following the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Nov. 4. "These doubles could be guarded by security agents like the real members of the government," the letter published in Yedioth Aharonot newspaper said. Mr. Leibovitch recalled that the late president of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos, foiled several attempts on his life by using at least 10 doubles. Saddam and his eldest son Uday Hussein also have doubles.

Russia to expand role in territories

CAIRO (AFP) — Russia aims to increase its role in the Palestinian territories after the extension of self-rule is completed there, its ambassador to Cairo, Vladimir Goudev, said on Monday. "Russia is eager to enlarge its activities in the autonomous regions through its representation bureau in Gaza after the spread of self-rule to the cities and villages of the West Bank," he said. Mr. Goudev made the comments to journalists after meeting Arab League Deputy Secretary General Said Kamal. Under accords signed by Israel and the PLO in Washington on Sept. 28, Israel will end its occupation of six West Bank towns by the end of the year to allow the Palestinian authority to take control. "Russia could increase the number of personnel at its representation bureau in Gaza" after the Israeli redeployment is completed, a Russian diplomatic source said. Mr. Goudev also underlined the importance of "promoting Arab investment in Russia to strengthen Russo-Arab ties." Mr. Kamal stressed the need for Russia "to continue the role it has taken as co-sponsor of the Arab-Israeli peace process" along with the United States.

League ready to oversee more elections

CAIRO (AFP) — The Arab League said Monday it was prepared to oversee more elections in the Arab World after its "successful" observation mission to Algeria's presidential vote last week. "We are ready to respond to any Arab country's request for the league's participation in observing its elections," league Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid told the press. Dr. Abdul Meguid praised as a "successful experience" the league's 34-member mission to oversee Algeria's elections on Thursday in which President Liamine Zeroual was reelected for a five-year term. The head of the league mission, Deputy General Ali, Abdul Karim, said the vote went "in a democratic and completely legal way." "No violations occurred and there was a determination by the Algerian people to escape the situation they are in and to send a clear message that they want stability," Mr. Abdul Karim said. The Algeria mission was the league's second and largest ever election observation team. The first was a four-member team that oversaw elections in Djibouti in 1993.

Cholera kills 5 in northern Iraq

DUBAI (AFP) — Five people have died from cholera and more than 400 others have been stricken with it since the disease broke out earlier this month in Kurdish-held northern Iraq, U.N. officials said Monday. Cities hit by the disease include Halabja in the southeast of Kurdistan as well as Sulaymaniyah in the east and Hadshi Omran along the northern border. U.N. and other officials said. The Iraqis have closed the border at Hadshi Omran to prevent the disease from entering Iran, a Kurdish health official in Erbil, Majeed Hamad Ameen, told AFP. The first case was reported 11 days ago near Halabja, where thousands of people died already. Mr. Ameen said, a U.N. official who had more up-to-date figures through his network said that a total of five people had died from the disease. Mr. Ameen feared that the cholera would continue to spread if the weather did not cool soon. "We don't even have enough medicine to treat the existing cases," an official with the World Health Organisation (WHO) said most of the estimated 100 people infected with cholera in Sulaymaniyah are students. "They got the disease because they're used to eating from small food stalls on the road," he said, asking not to be named. In Baghdad, U.N. coordinator Mohammad Jazari said a WHO expert was expected in northern Iraq in the next few days to take the "necessary steps against cholera."

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77111-14

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00	Captain Planet
14:30	M.A.N.T.I.S
15:15	Run the Gauntlet
16:00	I Love Lucy
16:30	Tarzan
17:00	Fractals
17:30	Scene — Fruits Et Legumes
18:00	Medical Magazine — Savant Plus
19:00	News in French
19:15	Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30	News Headlines
19:45	You Bet Your Life
20:00	The Secret of the Treasure Island
20:25	The Bold and the Beautiful
21:00	True Blue
21:30	News in English
22:00	News in English
22:30	News in English
23:00	News in English
23:30	News in English

PRAYER TIMES

04:44	Fajr
06:04	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:21	Asr
14:14	Dhuhr
16:38	Maghrib
17:59	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Swetfeth, Tel. 810741

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624501

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441

De la Salle Church Tel. 61757

Terresanta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 62541

Anglican Church Tel. 62526

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian Lutheran Church Tel. 625236

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 625338

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 645457

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 625432

Church of Nazareth Tel. 625691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulk rain supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to drop with a chance of rain, and winds southerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly moderate and very rough.

Min/Max temp. Amman 6/16

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Aqaba 12:23

Dhahran 12:22

Jordan Valley 12:22

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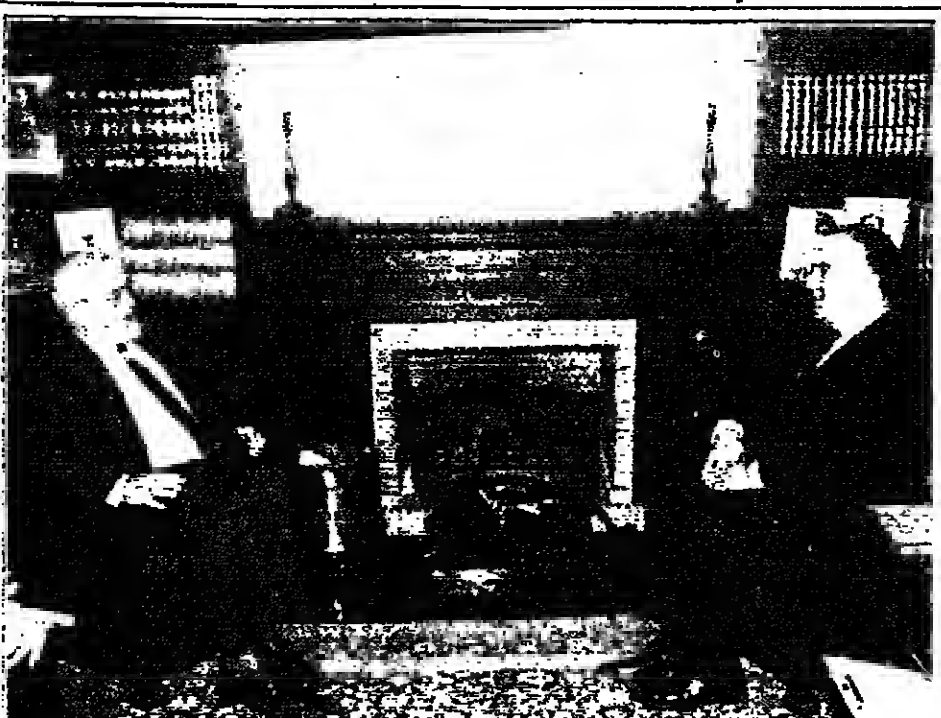
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FAREWELL CALL:

HRH Crown Prince Hassan Monday receives Hubert Dobers, the Resident Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation who called on the Crown Prince to bid him farewell before leaving Jordan and to introduce his successor, Olaf Kordgen. Mr. Dobers had met the Crown Prince during several seminars co-organised by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. During the meeting, which was also attended by Ali Oumil, Secretary General of the Arab Thought Forum, the close collaboration between the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the ATF was discussed (Photo by Boghos)



Committee to focus on National Strategy for Women

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW), headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, will focus its future work on the National Strategy for Women which was charted in September 1993, and the platform of action for the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September this year in accordance with Jordan's national priorities, Shadia Nusseir, a committee member, said on Monday.

"Increasing women's political and economic participation as well as promoting women's legal status is one of our major concerns," Mrs Nusseir said.

The second-term committee includes Minister of Justice Hisham Tal, and

representatives from the ministries of interior, municipal and rural affairs and the environment, social development and planning, the Judiciary Committee of the Lower House of Parliament and local women's committees around the Kingdom. It also includes representatives from academia, Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF), Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) and the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW).

The committee aims to follow up and evaluate the implementations of programmes that were designed to incorporate women in the economic, political and social development process in the country, said Mrs. Nusseir.

The current stage requires including representatives from the differ-

ent sectors that we have been dealing with for the last two years," she added. The achievements of the previous committee was amending some of the laws concerning women's legal status and organising workshops which increased women's participation in political life, said JNCW Director Hayam Kalinat.

"The Landlord and Tenants Law were amended to enable a newly divorced woman and her children to continue living in the house even if the lease was signed by her ex-husband. We were also able to have maternity leave benefits changed from a half paid and seven weeks leave to full pay and ten weeks," said Ms. Kalinat.

The committee along with judges and lawyers studied the legal status of women, and 90 per cent of

the articles which were addressed were amended, Ms Kalinat added.

Workshops aimed at increasing women's political participation were jointly organised by the committee, the British Council and the Canadian government, on ways to deal with the press, how to lobby and form presentations and design information pamphlets, said Rand Hindawi, director of the QAF's Women's Committee Department.

"We set up support groups in the different governorates of Jordan, from which Princess Basma recommended 99 women members be appointed to local municipal councils until last July's elections. At election time, 10 women were voted into office," said Ms. Hindawi.

Business team returns upbeat from trade talks in self-rule areas

By Samir Barhoum
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The head of a Jordanian business delegation which visited the West Bank and Gaza Strip recently described the visit as extremely successful but criticised obstacles placed by Israel in the face of Jordanian-Palestinian trade exchange.

Kamal Kakish, the vice-chairman of the board of directors of the Jordan Trade Association, which organised the Nov. 10-16 visit in conjunction with the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Trade Promotion Corporation, said the 27-member delegation, the first such team to visit the Palestinian territories since 1967, held talks with Palestinian officials and businessmen on means of enhancing bilateral cooperation and prospects of launching joint ventures.

Speaking at a press conference Monday at the association's premises in Amman, Mr. Kakish said the delegation and the Palestinian corporation signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at enhancing business ties and coordination in serving the goals of the two establishments as well as Jordanian and Palestinian interests.

One of the most important topics under discussion between Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen, according to Mr. Kakish,

was the need to establish a free zone area near the King Hussein Bridge linking Jordan with the West Bank.

He said such a zone, which he stressed would facilitate trade exchange between the two countries by enabling business people to store their merchandise without having to pay tariffs and customs duties, might be established in mid-1996.

Mr. Kakish said that the two sides underscored the importance of coordination among private sector representatives of the two sides when launching industrial projects to avoid establishing industries which exist in any of the two countries.

The two sides, he added, also called for removing obstacles placed by Israel on crossing points between Jordan and the Palestinian territories.

"Israel, of course, has an interest in keeping these obstacles," he asserted, adding that the private sector will pressure the Jordanian government to negotiate means of removing these obstacles with Israel.

"As an exporter, I face obstacles when sending merchandise across the bridge. One of my shipments, for example, was delayed for some time at the bridge by the Israeli authorities, which caused me to incur additional costs, thus raising the prices of my merchandise and making my products

uncompetitive against similar Israeli ones," said Mr. Kakish.

"War between us now has become economic, not military, and maybe this is natural after 27 years of occupation. We should now devise means to overcome these obstacles," he added, noting that Jordan's exports to the Palestinian territories during the past four months totalled JD 19 million, against imports of about JD 14 million.

He said for the first time since the Israeli occupation, the trade balance between the two sides is now in favour of Jordan.

He said the Kingdom's exports to the territories were expected to increase as more items are being added to the list of commodities that can be imported by the Palestinians, and said Jordanian commodities in the territories are in high demand.

According to Mr. Kakish, Jordanian businessmen currently sell heaters, gas cookers, ladders, electric appliances and other items in the territories.

Mr. Kakish said Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who met the delegation members in Gaza, urged Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen to break barriers created by Israel on crossing points in order to increase the Jordanian-Palestinian trade exchange.

Mr. Kakish said the Palestinian leader reaffirmed the

uniqueness of the Jordanian-Palestinian relations and highlighted the role of the private sector in enhancing these relations and achieving the aspirations of "the twin peoples."

Mr. Kakish said members of the delegation were upbeat about the visit and its outcome, but noted that it was premature to talk about any business deals signed during the visit, which aimed to establish joint ventures, market Jordanian and Palestinian products in Arab and foreign markets, secure raw materials for Palestinian industrialists at competitive prices and hold joint exhibitions abroad.

The delegation visited Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus and Gaza and met with officials at these cities' chambers of commerce and industry. During these visits, the delegation, which also met with Palestinian chief negotiator Faisal Hussein at Orient House in East Jerusalem, visited several factories to get familiarised with the Palestinian industrial sector.

Mr. Kakish said a delegation of Palestinian businessmen and industrialists will visit Jordan in the first half of 1996 at an invitation by the association to be acquainted with Jordanian industries and follow up on discussions with members of the Jordanian delegation.

Ministry seeks to encourage private sector participation in low-cost housing schemes

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Public Works and Housing is introducing regulations aimed to allow the private sector to contribute to the housing sector through building enterprises that meet the needs of low income groups, Minister of Public Works Abdul Razzak Ensour said Monday.

The ministry-affiliated Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) will continue constructing housing units suitable for the low income groups in different regions in cooperation with local municipal councils, the minister said at the opening of a workshop on technologies of low cost building.

In order to encourage private sector contribution the ministry is modernising and amending laws on land divisions enabling investors to use plots of land smaller in size than the present for the benefit of the majority of people of Jordan, according to the minister.

The minister said that the high cost of large plots of



Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour Monday addresses the opening of a workshop on technologies of low cost building to encourage the private sector to contribute to the scheme (Petra photo)

land prevents people from buying land for housing projects.

The ministry is hoping to create a situation whereby citizens will be able to build their homes within their own means.

To help build more homes required for the ever-increasing population, the concerned authorities are giving attention in the use of low cost building materi-

als in order to enable people to build good quality homes at the lowest possible cost, the minister said.

Rawhi Sharif of the Jordanian Engineers' Association (JEA) which is organising the workshop presented a working paper on the reduction of the cost of building.

Reducing the cost of building should not be at the expense of quality, he

said. He suggested building smaller windows to reduce cost.

One can build housing units from cheap but strong and reliable materials and create smaller areas, said Dr. Sharif.

In his working paper Mahdi Tuffaha outlined the housing situation in Jordan and said the country was in need of no less than 32,000 housing units annually.

Police investigate murder of elderly man

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police Monday continued their search for a suspect in connection with the murder of a 65-year-old man in his office in Jabal Hussein, according to official sources.

Najeh A. was found dead in his bed in his apartment which he also used as an office in Khaled Ibn Walid Street, the source said. The victim had a stab

wound to the chest, the sources told the Jordan Times Monday.

An autopsy performed on the victim Sunday indicated that he also received one blow to the head, but died as a result of a knife wound to the chest, the source said, adding that the victim had been dead for two or three days.

"We have a good idea of who the assailant/s might be and we hope to apprehend some suspects very soon," the source said.

According to the source, theft is believed to have been the motive behind the crime.

"When we went to the scene of crime we found small cases that belonged to the victim scattered everywhere as if someone was looking for something," said the source.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times Monday evening refused to reveal any details and said they were still investigating the incident.

Witnesses testify in Salt murder case

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Criminal Court Monday heard the testimonies of four witnesses in the case of a 29-year-old man accused of stealing, killing and murdering a man in Salt on August.

Kayed Ahmad, who earlier confessed to strangling Mahmoud Ensour in his house in Salt on Aug. 14, stealing his money then cutting his body into parts over a money feud pleaded innocent to all charges during the opening trial on Nov. 6.

Juma Abdullah, 40, a taxi driver, who was the last to see Mr. Ensour alive, told the court that on Aug. 14, the day of the murder, he saw the victim riding with the defendant and heading

towards downtown Salt at around 8:30 a.m.

The witness also told the court that he had previous knowledge of a financial feud between the victim and Ahmad, and that "the defendant was helping Mr. Ensour purchase a taxi licence."

In his confession after his arrest on Aug. 20, according to court documents, Ahmad, who was helping the victim to purchase a taxi licence, told police that he killed Mr. Ensour because he defrauded him of JD 700 and "he wanted to get rid of him because he kept asking for his money."

On Aug. 14, Ahmad asked Mr. Ensour to meet him at his house to finish the necessary papers, and while Mr. Ensour had his back to the suspect, he

jumped at him with a rope and strangled him, stole JD 2,000 and some documents, and hid his body in the bathroom and left the house "to think of way to dispose of the body."

Ahmad then returned to his house, borrowed a saw from his neighbour, cut the man's body into pieces and placed it in boxes and dumped the boxes in different areas in Salt.

Ahmad's neighbour, Basma Abed, 30, also testified that at around 10:30 a.m. the same day, Ahmad came to her house and asked to borrow a saw.

"I gave him the saw and four hours later he gave it back clean, and there were no traces of anything," Ms. Abed, a housewife said.

Khalid Lutfi, a university student and a friend of the

defendant said that he met him at night, and they went for a ride. He said Ahmad collected money from a man riding a pick-up truck in an area 10 kilometres from Salt.

"On his way back to Salt, Kayed (the defendant) bought a pair of shoes and some socks before dropping me off at home," he said.

The victim's wife, Amal, told the court that on the morning of the murder, her husband told her that he was able to buy a taxi licence and took JD 2,500 and some documents and left with Ahmad.

Presiding Judge Abdul Ruhman Tawfiq set Dec. 9 as the new date to hear five witnesses for the prosecution.

France, Jordan exchange views on judicial systems

AMMAN (Petra) — Judges from France and Jordan Monday opened a four-day roundtable meeting in Amman to discuss 12 topics related to judicial systems and human rights.

At the Jordanian Judicial Institute, where the meetings will be held, Justice Minister Hisham Tell said that in addition to discussions on certain topics already contained in six working papers, Jordanian judges will familiarise themselves with the French judicial system and will brief the French side on the Jordanian independent judicial system and the role and duties of the supreme court.

The French side will also be given information on the role played by the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Jordanian Constitution and cases that are

referred to it by parliament and other institutions.

Mifteh Qudah, the institute director, told the meeting that the discussions are within the framework of a 1990 agreement signed by the Jordanian institute and its French counterpart. The agreement provided for cooperation in training judges exchanging expertise in judiciary matters and in enhancing the concepts of democracy and respect of human rights.

During the first session, following the opening, the French side presented a working paper on European judicial systems and the protection of human rights. The paper outlined judicial systems in Europe and their provisions on protecting the independence of the judiciary and safeguarding human rights.

Jordan outlines West Bank educational broadcast plan

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has taken part in the 52nd meeting of a committee responsible for transmitting educational programmes to school students of the occupied Arab territories through radio and television.

The head of a Jordanian delegation to Cairo, Yousef Arrabi, said he presented an outline of Jordanian programmes which are broadcast over radio and television to West Bank students. These programmes derive their content from the same textbooks that Jordanian school students use, he said.

Mr. Arrabi said his delegation explained details of the agreement concluded by Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) which was signed in January 1995.

The agreement provides for Palestinian schools to continue using Jordanian

textbooks and educational syllabi until the PNA has prepared its own syllabi for Palestinian schools, he said.

The meeting was held at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo and was attended by delegates from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan in addition to the Arab League Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

The delegates presented their countries' plans for educational programmes directed towards West Bank students and discussed financial and technical matters related to the issues. They also discussed a memorandum by the Arab Broadcasting Union on giving training to producers, directors and supervisors of these educational programmes at the union's training centre in Damascus next year.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Chilleda" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman at 6.00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "The Arab World and the Nuclear Technology Challenge" (In Arabic) by Dr. Abdul Jawad Amarah at Abdulk Hameed Shoman Foundation.

* "Women and Elections in a Democratic Society" by Mark W. Cannon at the USIS Auditorium, the American embassy at 5.30 p.m.

SHORT STORY RECITAL

* Recital of short stories by Khalil Qandil at the Phoenix Gallery, Gardens St., at 6.00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Annual fall exhibition "Khawater" at the Jordan River Designs, (Tel. 613087/2) until Dec. 1.

* "Pakistani Women of Substance in paintings and photographs" at the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jebel Weibdeh.

* "Exhibition of stamps about the Royal Hashemite family (1916-1995) at the Royal Cultural Centre.

* "U.N. photo exhibition on the occasion of the U.N.'s 50th anniversary at Abdulk Hameed Shoman Gallery, Jabal Amman through to Nov. 23.

* Works by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at Orfali Art Gallery.

* Works by Dodi Taba'a entitled "Variations Graphiques 93-95" at the French Cultural Centre.

* "Sculptures & paintings by Iraqi Artist Ismail Fattah, and a retrospective exhibition of sculptures & drawings by Mona Saudi at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh

* Metal works by Ammar Khammash at Liwan, off Wadi Saqra Street. Also displaying all kinds of handicrafts. (Tel. 699141)

* Works by Nazih Abu Afesh at Balka Art Gallery, Fuheis.

Poland elects ex-Communist Kwasniewski to replace Walesa

WARSAW (AFP) — Aleksander Kwasniewski, one-time Communist turned Social-Democrat, won the race for Poland's presidency Monday, ousting incumbent Lech Walesa, the former shipyard electrician whose campaign against communism had heralded the end of Europe's Stalinist regimes.

Final results showed Mr. Kwasniewski winning 51.72 per cent of the vote against Mr. Walesa's 48.28 per cent in the final run-off round fought Sunday. Polish News Agency (PAP) said, after compiling tallies from the country's 49 voivodes or regions.

Mr. Kwasniewski, 41, whose victory was to be announced officially later Monday, immediately pledged to maintain Poland on the hard-won course of democracy established in 1989, after years of campaigning by Mr. Walesa's Solidarity Trade Union.

"Have no fear, democracy has won in Poland," he told the France-3 TV network. "We are a democratic country, more than before, Polish

society has shown its maturity, its democratic aptitude."

But stocks fell on the Warsaw Exchange as final results from the two-round election gave Mr. Kwasniewski a lead of around 650,000 votes ahead of his 52-year-old rival, a 1983 Nobel Peace Prize winner whose powerful personality has dominated national politics for the past 15 years.

Mr. Kwasniewski will formally take office for a five-year term on Dec. 23, five years and a day after Mr. Walesa stepped in as head of state.

His win extends the power of the Reformed Communists over both the executive and parliament, where a coalition led by his Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) won a majority in 1993.

It also comes as a harsh blow for the Roman Catholic Church which had endorsed the campaign of the devout church-going Walesa.

But Mr. Kwasniewski's spokesman said at the

weekend that if elected, the new head of state hoped to enjoy good ties with the outgoing president.

"Kwasniewski wants to be a unifying president and not one who divides, spokesman Zbigniew Siemiatkowski told PAP overnight.

Asked what role Mr. Walesa might play in the opposition camp, the spokesman said: "Will he be destructive or, in his role as ex-president, will he put his talent and experience and position at Poland's service?"

Both Mr. Kwasniewski and Mr. Walesa share much the same ground on pushing for a free market economic and a quicker rate of privatisation, as well as demanding membership for Poland of both the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union.

As expected, the southeast of the country gave most of its support to Mr. Walesa, who took nearly 70 per cent of the vote in the voivodes of Rzeszów and Tarnobrzeg. Mr. Kwasniewski did as well in his power-base in the west, picking up more than 65 per cent in Gorzów, Konin and

Leszno.

Mr. Walesa also scored well in the voivodes of Gdansk, with 65 per cent, and Warsaw, 62.4 per cent.

Historian Adam Michnik, in a Monday editorial in the *Gazeta Wyborcza* newspaper, attributed Mr. Kwasniewski's victory to the fact that Mr. Walesa's rhetoric was less reassuring for Poles than that of his smart-looking tennis-playing rival.

"Walesa wanted to frighten the Poles, even if he promised a normal life. Aleksander Kwasniewski was efficient, normal, professional. But his election means that the future becomes a big unknown. Which allies will Kwasniewski look for?"

Interior Minister Andrzej Milcunowski was swift to announce his resignation in the wake of Mr. Walesa's defeat, while Defence Minister Zbigniew Okonski and Foreign Minister Władysław Bartoszewski are likely to follow suit.

The three ministers had been appointed by Mr. Walesa in line with a constitutional provision putting the head of state in charge of foreign policy as well as internal and external security.

Russia took note Monday of Mr. Kwasniewski's victory as Poland's new president in a brief statement, saying only it hoped to see bilateral relations continue to develop.

"The Polish people know who to choose and they made their choice," reform Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said in comments quoted by Interfax News Agency.

He hoped for improvement in Russian-Polish relations, which he said were developing "rather well, but perhaps not as well as we would like."



Poland's outgoing President Lech Walesa reacts to a journalist's question about the results of the elections at the presidential palace (AFP photo)

Pro-Moscow Chechen leader survives blast

GROZNY, Russia (R) — Rebels tried to blow up a motorcade carrying the Moscow-appointed head of Chechnya Monday, wounding at least six people, local government officials said.

Regional leader Doku Zavgayev escaped with slight injuries from the morning attack on his four-vehicle convoy in the Chechen capital of Grozny, a Chechen government spokesman said.

But six people were injured "with varying degrees of seriousness," the spokesman said.

Mr. Zavgayev, a Soviet-era official appointed regional chief on Nov. 1, was treated for wounds to one eye and to the head. The first indications were that the injuries were not serious.

The attack was the third attempt on the life of a Russian or pro-Moscow official in two months and a sign of tensions in the southern region before Russia's parliamentary election on Dec. 17 in which Moscow says Chechnya

must also vote.

Interfax News Agency said Monday morning four Russian servicemen had been killed and 15 injured in more than 60 attacks on Russian military positions in the past 24 hours.

In Moscow, a spokesman said the Kremlin leader, recovering in hospital from a heart problem, had been told of the attack.

Presidential press secretary Sergei Medvedev said Mr. Yeltsin, who sent Russian forces into Chechnya last December to end the rebels' drive for independence, was "extremely worried by the rising wave of terrorism" in Chechnya.

Mr. Medvedev was quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency as saying such "treacherous attacks" would not halt peace moves.

The rebels have vowed to disrupt voting in Chechnya in December and say it could kindle civil war.

TASS quoted sources close to rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev as saying his forces had not staged

the attack on Mr. Zavgayev.

"We had nothing to do with an attempt on Doku Zavgayev's life and we consider this aimed at boosting his authority in the republic," pro-Dudayev official Akhmat Ildigov said.

Mr. Zavgayev himself vowed he would not be deterred from organising Russian elections on the territory.

"The attempt on my life was carried out by people who want the war to go on and want an escalation of tension. I am not going to swerve from carrying out elections in Chechnya," he told reporters after receiving medical treatment in his office.

In an almost simultaneous attack, an armoured column carrying aides to Oleg Lobov, Mr. Yeltsin's representative in Chechnya, came under fire from unidentified assailants in central Grozny, a Chechen press spokesman said.

Details of the attack were sketchy but TASS said nobody was hurt. Mr. Lobov apparently was not in the convoy.

On Sept. 20 Mr. Lobov

escaped unhurt from a bomb attack on a convoy at a bridge near Grozny. On Oct. 6 an attack on an armed column in Grozny injured Moscow's military commander in the region, Lieutenant-General Anatoly Romanov. He is in a coma.

Security officials told TASS that Monday's bomb, which rocked Mr. Zavgayev's convoy as he travelled from the airport to his offices, appeared to have been detonated by remote control.

After the explosion the attackers opened fire from the rooftops of nearby buildings using automatic weapons, TASS said. Bodyguards inside the motorcade returned fire.

The attacks and the row over elections has further dimmed hopes that Moscow and the rebels can find a political solution to a conflict which has killed tens of thousands of people. The rebels want independence but Moscow has ruled this out.

Adams tells Britain to name date for peace talks

BELFAST (R) — Gerry Adams, head of the IRA's political arm Sinn Féin, has said that Britain must name a date for unconditional round-table talks to shore up Northern Ireland's bruised peace process.

As Dublin studied new British proposals for lasting peace after a year of guerrilla truces, Mr. Adams accused London of trying to divide nationalists opposed to its rule over the province.

Mr. Adams, who said he did not know what the new British formula contained, told reporters in Belfast: "What we want is a date for all-party talks as soon as possible."

"That is required to re-establish the peace process. I can't stress this enough, the peace process has been subverted (by Britain) and undermined and eroded to

the point where it has been reduced to a cessation (of violence)."

Britain is reported to have conceded a target date for full peace negotiations with Sinn Féin and other parties early in the new year, but is also reported to be sticking to a demand for Irish Republican Army (IRA) weapons to be handed in first.

Sinn Féin argues that targets can move, and only a fixed date will galvanise efforts to transform cease-fires by the IRA, and its foes in pro-British loyalist groups, into lasting peace.

Mr. Adams said any proposals that retained Britain's demand for the surrender of IRA weapons, which the guerrillas used in a 25-year war they called off 15 months ago, would be unworkable.

Officials in Dublin said Irish Prime Minister John Bruton would respond soon to proposals sent to him Saturday by Britain's John Major.

"The (British) prime minister's letter is being very carefully and seriously considered with a view to an early response," an Irish government spokesman said.

It is expected that the two leaders will have a telephone conversation in the next 48 hours.

British officials hope Mr. Major's plans will pave the way for a blueprint to be launched at an Anglo-Irish summit before U.S. President Bill Clinton visits Northern Ireland on Nov. 30.

Political commentators say that if new energy is not injected into the peace

process, Mr. Clinton risks stepping into a political vacuum in the British-ruled province.

Sinn Féin blames British inertia for the deadlock, while Britain points the finger at the IRA for holding on to guns and driving the province's pro-British Protestant politicians away from the negotiating table.

Protestant "Unionist" leaders despise the Republicans' aspiration for a united Ireland. They want the province to have its own decision-making assembly to strengthen ties to London.

Dublin and moderate nationalists argue that guerrilla disarmament should be an objective of all-party talks, not a precondition for them.



Former Communist Aleksander Kwasniewski and his wife acknowledge the applause by supporters in his headquarters in the Polish capital, Warsaw, late Sunday (AFP photo)

Chernomyrdin accuses opponents of empty promises on economic issues

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, facing a parliamentary poll in less than a month, accused his opponents Sunday of making empty promises on economic issues.

"They all make promises but nobody says how they will do it, how they will pay for it," Mr. Chernomyrdin said in an interview broadcast on public Russian Television.

"I will not promise that everything will be sorted out and that we will have no problems," he added.

But he said many problems would be resolved as a result of what the government had done.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, who leads the centrist Our Home

Is Russia bloc, has announced several initiatives in recent weeks to ease the financial problems of those hit by market reforms.

Last week he announced measures to pay budget arrears to the military and compensation for victims of collapsed investment schemes.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said in Sunday's television interview that military wage arrears had to be paid in full in November.

He said Saturday that President Boris Yeltsin had signed a decree to compensate millions of Russians who had lost their savings in collapsed investment funds. The compensation would come from "various sources" including privati-

sation revenue.

Last Thursday he announced a package of financial measures to help the struggling Russian media.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, whose bloc trails the Communists in the run-up to the Dec. 17 poll, paid tribute to deputies in the State Duma lower house of parliament for passing the 1996 budget at the first reading last Wednesday.

The budget had stalled, largely over disagreement about next year's inflation target, which some deputies wanted to see relaxed.

The draft envisages 1.9 per cent monthly inflation and Mr. Chernomyrdin said price rises had to be curbed.

"It is tough but it has to be done," he said.

Mexican government, rebels strike partial deal for Indians

SAN ANDRES LARRAINZAR, Mexico (R) — Mexican government envoys and Chiapas guerrillas agreed Sunday on a deal offering greater autonomy to Mexican Indians, but the authorities kept firm control of oil reserves in the southern state.

At the end of six days of peace talks Sunday, a joint statement said the government and guerrillas of the self-styled Zapatista National Liberation Army had agreed to "assure the autonomy of indigenous people."

They said the agreement would "guarantee the exercise of (indigenous) forms of socio-cultural and political organisation (and) access to the use and the

enjoyment of natural resources, except those whose management corresponds to the nation."

That was a clear reference to the untapped oil reserves in Chiapas — a font of potential wealth partly on Maya lands that the Indians would like to get their hands on.

Oil production in Mexico, however, is the exclusive domain of state-owned monopoly Petroleos Mexicanos (Pemex), and the government insists it will not let its sovereignty over those oil fields be challenged at the bargaining table.

The government's refusal to cede full territorial rights to indigenous communities was a blow to the rebels,

who had hoped to set up power bases in fully autonomous regions.

"We say it clearly: We have doubts because we don't see factual signs that show the political will to reach a full-scale peace agreement, one of the rebel's masked negotiators, Commander Tacho, told reporters after the ninth round of negotiations ended.

The Zapatistas, named after Mexico's peasant revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata, also appeared unable to force the government to overturn a 1993 constitutional amendment allowing foreign and private investment in land.

CIU wins Catalan elections but Aznar makes big gains

MADRID (R) — Spain's veteran Catalan leader Jordi Pujol again won regional elections Sunday but lost his absolute majority, apparently paying a price for supporting the nationally-ruling, crisis-hit Socialists.

It was his fifth successive victory in the country's industrial heartland.

But the big winner, in a poll widely seen as a barometer for a general election expected next March, was the centre-right Popular Party which more than doubled its representation in the regional parliament.

The election in Catalonia, home to 15 per cent of Spain's population and source for 20 per cent of its gross domestic product, was seen as an indication of how far Socialist support is falling away at national level.

With 97 per cent of the vote counted, Mr. Pujol's Convergencia i Unió (Convergence And Unity, CIU) had won 60 seats in the 135-seat regional assembly, short of a majority, and will probably have to agree a pact with another party in order to govern.

PP leader Jose Maria Aznar, tipped by opinion polls as winning the March general election, was quick to claim significance at national level in Sunday's

vote.

"This result will serve to clear up many doubts over Spanish political life," he said at party headquarters in Madrid.

"Spaniards know that the PP offers stability, security and hope, now also in Catalonia," he added.

Mr. Pujol, 65, had called the elections early after failing to persuade embattled Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to call a general election, not due until 1997, before the end of 1995.

The Catalan leader was anxious to avoid electoral fallout from his parliamentary support for the Socialists, agreed after 1993 general elections, as a result of a scandal this year linking Mr. Gonzalez with a "dirty war" against Basque guerrillas.

Mr. Pujol broke with the Socialists in September but Mr. Gonzalez has refused to call elections earlier than next March.

According to the latest count, the CIU's share of the vote had fallen to 40.8 per cent from 46.2 per cent, while the Socialists fell to 24.9 per cent from 27.5 per cent and the PP rose to 13.1 per cent from 6.0 per cent.

Turnout at 64 per cent was the highest in Catalan regional elections since 1984.

The extent of lost votes

means Mr. Pujol has little choice but to seek a pact or coalition, according to United Left leader Julio Anguita, but Mr. Pujol himself left his options open.

"We had hoped to obtain better results from these elections but we still have 25 seats more than the next party," he told a news conference, declining to say what his next steps might be in order to form a government.

Despite the drop in Socialist votes, former Deputy Prime Minister Narcis Serra said he was encouraged by his party's vote which he noted was double that obtained by the PP.

"Those who saw a collapse in Socialist votes because of the political climate at present in Spain have been found to have been mistaken," Mr. Serra said on state radio.

He did not rule out the Socialists agreeing a pact with the CIU.

The centrist CIU is closer in ideology to the PP but diametrically opposed on regional autonomy policy, on which it was able to make some progress as a result of its two-year pact with the Socialists.

Mr. Pujol, in an interview published Friday, would not say if he was willing to agree a pact with the PP.

Beatles release first new single for 25 years

LONDON (R) — The voice of John Lennon sang out plaintively from beyond the grave Monday as the first new Beatles song for 25 years was released to radio and television stations around the world. Free As A Bird, a slow ballad recorded by Lennon as a demo tape three years before he was shot dead in 1980, was delivered at dawn London time and played within minutes over international airwaves. The three surviving Beatles, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr, got back together in the recording studio to provide the backing for the song, which is expected to go straight to the top of pop music charts. Mojo music magazine editor Paul Du Noyer told BBC Radio after hearing it: "It's a bit of a dirge for the first half but I think there's a tune in there that will get under the skin. Like a lot of Beatles fans, I've been quite worried about the new record, but on hearing the single for the first time I think they might just get away with it," he said. Other music critics said the song had more of a 1980s feel than the sixties sound of the Beatles heyday. The song goes on sale worldwide Tuesday on a Beatles album featuring old and new tracks and original recordings not heard before. Free As A Bird will also be released as a single on Dec. 4.

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Congress, Clinton resolve budget crisis

WASHINGTON (R) — Over 700,000 federal workers were expected to return to work Monday after the White House and the Republican Congress hammered out broad outlines of a deal to balance the budget by 2002 and end the longest-ever federal shutdown.

President Bill Clinton agreed Sunday to Republican demands for a balanced budget in seven years instead of the 10 years he proposed, but won their pledge to protect Medicare, education and other domestic programmes from deep spending cuts.

The deal ended an unprecedented six-day partial shutdown of the U.S. government which closed federal offices across the country, slowed down embassies around the world and even shut the Grand Canyon in Arizona for the first time ever.

Hailed by both sides as a victory, the two-paraphrase accord will keep the government operating through Dec. 15, giving Mr. Clinton and the Republicans nearly a month to craft a long-term federal tax and spending plan.

The Republican-controlled Congress wants to cut projected federal spending by nearly \$1 trillion and cut taxes by \$245 billion, balancing the budget in seven years.

Mr. Clinton has expressed doubts about achieving a balanced budget in the shorter time frame, but said he was willing to try as long as domestic programmes were safeguarded.

"The key is that nothing will be agreed to unless all

elements are agreed to," he said after the deal was reached.

"Tomorrow the government will go back to work and now the debate will begin in earnest on how to balance the budget in a way that is consistent with the interest and the values of the American people," he said Sunday.

The president later signed a one-day spending bill passed by both House of Representatives and Senate late Sunday and was poised to sign a similar bill Monday extending the government's funding through Dec. 15 once it cleared the House.

The longer-term deal keeps the government running while regular spending bills for all of fiscal 1996 are completed.

Mr. Clinton has signed six of the 13 regular bills, but has criticised a seventh, the Defence Department Bill, for providing \$7 billion more for defence than he wants.

But Republican Senator John Warner of Virginia pointed out that the military needs the money, especially if Mr. Clinton is contemplating sending troops to Bosnia.

Difficult negotiations are also expected on taxes.

White House officials interpret a promise in the agreement to "help working families" as a \$500 per child tax credit for two parent-families with an adjusted gross income under \$110,000, while White House officials say the compromise would protect the earned income tax credit for the working poor.



The Princess of Wales is seen leaving the Chelsea Harbour Club in London Monday after a fitness workout on the day the BBC were due to screen a 60-minute Panorama interview given by the princess (AFP photo)

Charles said furious over Diana interview

LONDON (R) — Britain's Prince Charles was reported Monday to be furious at the decision of his estranged wife Princess Diana to bare her soul in a television interview and has vowed she will never be crowned queen.

With details of the unprecedented interview still a closely guarded secret ahead of screening Monday evening (2140 GMT), newspapers predicted a rough ride for Princess Diana at the hands of the royal family, whatever she says.

Friends of the 34-year-old princess, who was separated from Prince Charles in 1992, have said she will use the hour-long solo interview to state that she does not want a divorce and wants to serve her country.

But she is also expected to talk frankly about her marriage to the heir to the throne, which started with a fairy-tale wedding in 1981 and turned quickly into a loveless nightmare for both of them.

"The prince (Charles) is absolutely shattered and just can't believe she has actually given this interview," one friend was reported as telling the Daily Express newspaper. Veteran royal watcher James Whitaker, writing in the Daily Mirror, said that despite Princess Diana's wishes Prince Charles had already drawn up plans for a divorce to take place when Queen Elizabeth dies and he is ready to ascend to the throne.

"I will never sit on the throne with that woman at my side," Mr. Whitaker quoted Prince Charles as telling friends.

"In the months between Prince Charles succeeding to the throne and his coronation, there would have to be a divorce. Matters are in hand," the unidentified friend added.

About 20 million people in Britain are expected to watch the interview, which Princess Diana gave to the BBC without consulting Buckingham Palace, Prince Charles or even her own private secretaries.

It follows a lengthy television programme about Prince Charles, 47, last year in which the prince publicly admitted adultery with his old flame Camilla Parker-Bowles.

Princess Diana was pictured having a heart-to-heart talk with her 13-year-old son Prince William Sunday outside his elite private school in Eton, west of London.

It is thought she was preparing him for what she would be saying in the interview and onlookers said the young prince looked distressed.

"It was a very intense meeting. Prince William looked shaken and shuffled from foot to foot and Princess Diana did most of the talking. Prince William was clearly disturbed," one German tourist who witnessed the scene told the Sun newspaper.

Meanwhile British constitutional experts as well as millions of viewers will watch for any hint from Princess Diana on a possible divorce when the hour-long scoop television interview is aired.

Up to 20 million British viewers — as many as 200 million worldwide — are expected to watch Princess Diana's chat with journalist Martin Bashir, which is being aired on BBC's Panorama news programme.

Constitutional experts say Princess Diana's decision to grant the interview seems to seal the couple's separation.

"I would doubt she will address the question of divorce directly but it's hard to see it being avoided altogether," said Dr. Bob Borthwick, who has written extensively on the monarchy.

"Constitutionally, there is no problem with Prince Charles becoming king as a divorcee and that is still the likeliest scenario. But I can't see Diana becoming queen. That's just not realistic."

He added: "Divorce would now be the nearest solution." Experts say they do not expect Princess Diana to kiss and tell, despite constant speculation about her own love life.

"She has hit below the belt (in conducting this secret interview) but I'm certain it will be an attempt to make her seem as pure as driven snow," said Harold Brooks-Baker, publishing director of the nobility directory Burke's Peerage.

He said Princess Diana will dwell on her work for charity, devotion as a mother and her avowed fealty to crown and country.

Should they divorce, the queen could in theory make Princess Diana a duchess and leave Prince Charles free to wed again, with Camilla Parker Bowles the most likely bride. The only barrier to a Queen Camilla would be public opinion.

But even traditionalists who might wince at the idea of two middle-aged divorcees setting up house in Buckingham Palace now favour a fresh start over the current state of limbo.

"A royal divorce may be painful, but it is needed and soon," said Lord Blake, a leading constitutional expert. "The present arrangement is causing pain to all parties — and it is destroying our monarchy."

Elite Sri Lanka troops enter city limits of Jaffna

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's elite Reserve Strike Force took over from regular troops Monday and entered the city limits of the rebel bastion of Jaffna, the army said.

Army officials said the elite troops were cautiously advancing on the city centre, the Tamil rebel stronghold for the past 10 years, now a booby-trapped fortress sheltering a clutch of guerrillas from an imminent army assault.

The elite troops began moving towards the city centre at dawn amid conflicting reports of casualties in a fierce battle in the suburbs of Jaffna Sunday.

The Reserve Strike Force Division, including commandos, the Special Forces Brigade, Rapid Deployment Force and Special Air Mobile Troops, took over from regular troops as they captured the strategic town of Nallur and entered Jaffna City's municipal limits, the state-run Lankapuvath News Agency said.

An army statement said troops had captured Nallur, within the city limits of Jaffna.

An ancient Hindu temple there, regarded as the holiest shrine of Hindu Tamils but also revered by the majority Buddhist

Sinhalese, was safe, it said. The rebel Voice of Tigers radio had earlier claimed the temple was damaged by army shelling.

The radio said Monday that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels had killed 50 government troops and destroyed two tanks during Sunday's battle near the Jaffna suburb of Irupai.

The radio, monitored in the government-held front-line town of Vavuniya, said a naval squad of the LTTE mounted attacks on Sri Lankan Navy boats searching for a cargo plane wreck.

The LTTE had shot down the Chinese-built Y-8 plane over the sea as it approached the army's northern Palaly Air Base Saturday. At least three airmen were killed and two were missing. One man was rescued alive.

Newspapers said the army was investigating how the guerrillas had been able to come within firing range of the plane despite heavy patrolling of the sea.

The rebel claim of army casualties was at variance with the official toll which put troop losses at 12 in Sunday's fighting.

The radio gave no figures of guerrilla losses but the army says 60 rebels were killed in the encounter.

"The tanks were still burning Monday," the radio said.

State radio said Sunday troops had advanced to about 800 metres from the town centre.

The rebel radio said unexploded bombs posed a danger to refugees arriving at the Kilinochchi shelters south of Jaffna.

A boy was killed when a shell exploded there as refugees cleared the area to set up tents.

The Tigers said the device was fired by government troops some time ago from their nearby Elephant Pass base.

The official toll on both sides Sunday was estimated at 160 LTTE rebels and soldiers killed in the north and east.

"Almost every building in the area had been booby-trapped," the state radio said Sunday. The army lost 12 soldiers in the clash and 84 were wounded, mostly by mines laid by retreating rebels, it added.

The guerrillas struck back in eastern Sri Lanka, killing 38 government soldiers in a Sunday ambush as the troops patrolled a railway track at Shanthiveli in Batticaloa district. The

army said 50 LTTE guerrillas were killed in the attack.

Meanwhile the fiery leader of India's rightwing regional Hindu Shiv Sena party Sunday came out strongly in support of the Tamil guerrillas fighting for a separate homeland in Sri Lanka.

"The injustices wreaked on Tamilians living in Sri Lanka are unacceptable," said Shiv Sena leader Bal Thackeray, in an address to party lieutenants meeting in Bombay.

"I am for the LTTE," said Mr. Thackeray, whose party, primarily based in India's western state of Maharashtra, has a snarling Tiger for its emblem. "I am proud of those Tigers."

In his address, Mr. Thackeray exhorted the members of his party to assert their Hindu identity and fight for their rights, a plank that Shiv Sena hopes to use in campaigning in national polls due next year.

As the meeting of party leaders from 18 Indian states ended, delegates said they had decided to focus on issues central to the party's Hindu philosophy, like the reconstruction of ancient Hindu temples at sites now occupied by Muslim mosques.

Bangladesh politics take new turn at last supper

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh's unending dilemma over future elections took a new turn Monday after the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) hinted at a rough ride for the opposition calling for polls under a neutral authority.

Party sources said an almost certain decision that Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia would ask the president to dissolve parliament this week may be shelved for weeks.

"A strong opinion in favour of delaying the dissolution emerged at the last supper hosted by Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali Sunday for BNP members of parliament," one source said.

Mr. Ali prorogued what was believed to be parliament's last session Saturday. The MPs have since been feted by President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Mrs. Khaleda before the speaker hosted what parliament officials called the farewell supper.

Parliament functioned without an opposition since March 1994 after opposition leader Sheikh Hasina led 147 legislators into a 10-month boycott followed by their mass resignation in December.

The Election Commission said by-elections for the vacant seats "must be announced by Nov. 22 to fulfil constitutional requirements."

But the government and the commission almost agreed to skip the by-elections, which the opposition said it would boycott, and instead announce general elections probably for January, two months before schedule.

Party sources said the decision faced heated argument after BNP's Secretary-General Abdus Salam Talukder returned home Sunday from the United States following treatment for heart ailments.

His followers pressed the issue harder when government leaders attended Sunday's dinner. "Now the

tilt is toward announcing schedules for the by-elections first and wait till the day of the submission of nominations," one source said.

"Unless no one proposes his candidacy or the number of candidates are meagre (then) the president will dissolve parliament and the election commission will announce parliamentary polls."

But BNP leaders said a final decision rested with the prime minister.

Political analysts said the BNP might push the country towards an open confrontation by trying to hold by-elections.

BNP sources said they expected two gains from the move — to have more time to try to reach a settlement with opposition groups and to minimise campaigning time for the opposition if they agree to general elections.

"Actually, BNP wants to give the opposition a rough ride," one party official said

without elaborating.

Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina said Monday her group Awami League and its allies would not take part in any elections under the BNP government.

"They want Mrs. Khaleda to step down immediately and allow elections supervised by a neutral caretaker administration, one preferably headed by the chief justice."

Mrs. Khaleda, elected in 1991 in what were billed as Bangladesh's first free polls, has rejected the opposition demands as unconstitutional.

"It appears that the whole thing is taking a U-turn ahead of expected elections as the BNP tries to buy time," one Asian diplomat said Monday.

"We suspect such a move could provoke violence and make the opposition's resolve to stay away from polls even firmer," he told Reuters.

Mandela summons Shell executives over Nigeria

JOHANNESBURG (R) — President Nelson Mandela summoned top executives of Shell in South Africa Monday and expressed "deep disappointment" at the lack of pressure by the oil company against the Nigerian government, the ANC said.

"The president raised strongly the need for Shell to show its outrage and lack of pressure on the Nigerian regime," African National Congress (ANC) spokesman Carl Niehaus told a news conference in Johannesburg.

Mr. Mandela has taken charge of an international campaign to isolate Nigeria's military leaders following the executions this

month of nine minority rights activists, including writer Ken Saro-Wiwa.

"Despite the strong plea from the president there has not until now been any substantial positive response from Shell," Mr. Niehaus said.

"As the president said this morning, this kind of response from Shell is deeply disappointing," Mr. Niehaus said.

Mr. Niehaus was addressing a news conference with ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa, who returned from Britain where he had talks on Nigeria and other issues with British Prime Minister John Major.

"I am disgusted at the way Shell has handled the whole

matter," Mr. Ramaphosa said, referring particularly to a planned joint gas project between Shell and Nigeria.

Mr. Niehaus said further meetings would be held with Shell South Africa's executives before any possible steps against the oil giant would be considered in South Africa.

Mr. Mandela has asked U.S. President Bill Clinton to impose oil sanctions, saying he will pressure Mr. Major to do the same and wants China to back Nigeria's isolation by the U.N. Security Council.

The Commonwealth, which was holding its summit in New Zealand at the time of the executions, sus-

pended Nigeria's membership and has given it two years to clean up its act or face expulsion.

Mr. Mandela said this was too long and he wanted quick change.

Some Western and African states, including South Africa, have withdrawn their diplomats from Nigeria or banned military sales to its government. But they stopped short of imposing an embargo on Nigeria's oil, the mainstay of the economy.

Nigeria produces around two million barrels per day of crude oil. About half its exports go to the United States.

More Timorese seek embassy refuge despite protests

JAKARTA (R) — More than 100 youths staged pro-Indonesian demonstrations around parliament and in front of the French embassy Monday, only hours after four East Timorese sought refuge in the embassy.

At Indonesia's parliament, youths claiming to be from East Timor protested against a wave of high-profile asylum bids by East Timorese and declared support for Indonesian rule.

The same group also demonstrated at the French embassy, where four East Timorese had dashed in hours earlier, the second group to seek refuge in the embassy in less than a week and the fifth sanctuary bid

at Jakarta embassies in two months.

"It's true. The French officials told me that another four are inside at the moment," Ahmad Alkauri, leader of the pro-integration East Timorese, told journalists after meeting French officials inside the embassy.

Embassy officials declined comment but Foreign Ministry spokesman Ghafar Fadyil told Reuters the ministry knew of the incident, adding the four were seeking asylum in Portugal.

"We are informed about the incident and we find out the East Timorese are students. We are still looking for more information about them," he said.

Carrying Indonesian flags and singing the Indonesian national anthem, the pro-Indonesian protesters, who said they were students and workers, earlier marched on parliament and called East Timorese who sought asylum overseas "traitors".

"We are ready to defend the integration (with Indonesia). Asylum seekers are traitors," read their banners.

Mr. Alkauri, leader of the protesters, told reporters Monday that Timorese who sought political asylum were people who wanted a better life but were unwilling to work hard.

Some 39 East Timorese have gained asylum in Portugal after bursting into the

embassies of Britain, the Netherlands, Japan and France since September.

One Western diplomat said Monday his embassy would do its best to discourage the Timorese into coming, but added public pressure in his country was such that the embassy could not turn them onto the street.

"Their presence in an embassy is very disruptive. But the basic question is who has an interest in the flow of these East Timorese. Is it to say to Western embassies you are sticking up for East Timor — now have some of your own medicine? Or is it done to discredit senior government officials?" he asked.

panel allows
ing drug for
hair loss

INGTON (AP) — Americans should be to buy the hair drug Rogaine with a prescription, a panel of the Food and Drug Administration voted 12-4 that it is well labeled and should be available without a prescription, the panel said Monday. The drug can treat the hair loss that affects many people, the panel said. Rogaine is a brand name for minoxidil, a drug that has been used for years to treat hair loss. The panel's decision is expected to be finalized by the FDA in the coming weeks. The drug is currently available over-the-counter without a prescription. The panel's decision is based on a review of the drug's safety and effectiveness. The panel also noted that the drug is well tolerated and has a long history of use. The panel's decision is expected to be finalized by the FDA in the coming weeks. The drug is currently available over-the-counter without a prescription. The panel's decision is based on a review of the drug's safety and effectiveness. The panel also noted that the drug is well tolerated and has a long history of use.

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Checking Israeli terrorism

THE BACKLASH against Jewish extremism in the wake of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin two weeks ago has accelerated and reached a forceful momentum. Even Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu has moved swiftly to disassociate himself from Israeli and Jewish fundamentalists after he and his party were accused of whipping up hate propaganda that culminated in the assassination of Mr. Rabin. Mr. Netanyahu also made daring attempts to distance himself and his fellow ideologues from American-Jews linked with factions that stood behind the hate fever against peace with the Palestinians. Mr. Netanyahu and his party must have taken due notice of the sudden sharp drop in the popularity of their views on peace in the Middle East and the abrupt upsurge in the popularity of their opponents.

Yet, in spite of all the last-ditch efforts by Likud to contain the dangers to its political fortunes, the backlash against Israeli and Jewish extremism continues unabated. This backlash was given a powerful expression when the government decided this week to bar radical Jews from entering Israel as immigrants or tourists. This is in defiance of Israeli sacrosanct "law of return" that gives every Jew on earth an absolute right to immigrate to Israel and obtain an Israeli citizenship in fulfillment of an old Zionist dream of gathering all the Jews of the world in Israel.

Now there are growing voices within Israel who are calling for a reconsideration of this blanket authorisation to all Jews to live in Israel in a clear bid to weed out Jewish extremists. Israeli minister of environment, Yossi Sarid, has actually suggested amending the controversial "law of return" to prevent the inflow of Jewish enemies of peace. There is no doubt that this latest bold initiative came in concert with the new mood in his country, especially after it was established that Israeli extremists have even infiltrated the Shin Bet, the ultra secret state security apparatus.

The struggle against extremism, has also taken an additional form when the government of acting Prime Minister Shimon Peres Sunday decided to introduce additional legislation to curb the activities and actions of extremists among the Israeli population. "The government," a cabinet statement at the conclusion of an emergency meeting Sunday said, "declares that extremist, violent, racist and terrorist organisations pose a great threat to the democratic regime of Israel." The statement continued to state that "the government will not permit Jews from abroad to come to Israel as immigrants, tourists, residents or citizens if they express support for organisations which have been outlawed or if they support acts of violence."

These are all welcome developments and will augur well for regional peace. The Arab side had often complained about Jewish extremism in the past and some of these complaints date back to 1947 and 1948, when bands of Jewish extremist organisations went on a campaign of terrorism and genocide against Palestinian people. Now at last, it has dawned on Israel that it should put a leash on its own fanatics. They are, after all, among the primary enemies of peace and reconciliation in the area.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ONCE AGAIN terrorism succeeds in causing the death of innocent people and in sowing grief in the hearts of many families, said Al Rai daily Monday. Referring to the car bomb blast in Islamabad, the paper said that the criminal act which shook the Pakistani capital shows that the perpetrators have failed to achieve their evil act inside the Egyptian territory and that the extremist groups, which carried out the attack, have been backed by foreign circles which facilitated the attack. The paper said that such attacks on civilian targets do not prove the success of terrorism in achieving the goal of its perpetrators, nor do they show that the criminals have any courage. The attack, which was claimed by Islamist groups in Egypt, was directed against the Islamic faith and its nature is alien to Muslim principles and beliefs, said the paper. The attack, it added, has aroused in the Arab and Muslim hearts great pain and anger and has underlined the need for collective action to combat terrorism and extremism.

BY ELECTING Liamine Zeroual, the moderate Algerian statesman, the Algerian people have thus opted for an era of democracy, free of fear and bloodshed and chosen a path of security and stability, said Al Doustour daily. The paper said the Algerian people are fed up with violence, explosions and armed conflict, and are ready to do anything they can to stop the fratricide in their country. Mr. Zeroual, who advocated moderation and dialogue for ending disputes, has won the favour of his people who had offered heavy sacrifice for their freedom from French colonial rule, said the daily. The results of the Algerian elections, continued the paper, have shown that the silent majority rejects confrontation and conflict, and seek dialogue and peaceful settlement of domestic affairs and a return to democracy and respect of human rights.

The View from Fourth Circle

The statue, the press, the professional associations and the law

By Rami G. Khouri

NOW THAT the statue has appeared and disappeared, the major domestic political issue of the day is the state's effort to translate its displeasure with elements in the press and the professional associations into new laws that clearly define the concerned parties' roles and rules. This seems, on the surface, to be a straightforward and reasonable matter of translating the enlightened leadership directives of His Majesty King Hussein into new laws and regulations. But, like the fabulously telling statue incident itself, this matter comprises a rather more complex and exciting dynamic with three principal protagonists: the King, the government and the people. How this matter plays itself out in the coming weeks and months will tell us a lot about our likely future trend of national development. It is important first of all to admit two cardinal points: there are serious problems with our press and the professional associations that must be resolved, and King Hussein played his normal constructive leadership role in bringing this fact to the attention of the country. Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker also performed a valuable service when he spoke out earlier this week against imposed negative principles and willfully destructive criticism. On all these counts, I am fully in agreement with the trend of events to date.

What happens, though, after the King defines the issue and asks the state and society for appropriate action? Here is where we run into more turbulent ground. The tendency in the government seems to be strongly towards rewriting the existing laws in order to address the problems at hand. I think this is hasty and inappropriate, and I would urge the government to think long and hard about the best manner in which it responds to His Majesty's call for constructive change. We do not, after all, want to run the risk of restricting freedom and democracy in the name of protecting them, or of abusing the law-making parliamentary institution in the name of affirming and strengthening the rule of law.

This is treacherous ground, but not novel or unusual — for almost every country in the world that has made a transition from traditional patriarchy to participatory democracy has also found itself grappling with new stresses and strains in the post-launch period. So let's not exaggerate our situation; we are not writing the book on Third World democratisation, but we are adding another chapter to it. Many other countries have had to deal with the same issues we face today. It is important for the state and society to act cautiously and intelligently on these issues, and not to panic or indulge in hasty solutions that only make the problems worse. We should first accurately identify four elements of the press and professional associations (PA) problem as it has been put on the national agenda by King Hussein: The problem's nature, causes, extent, and consequences. My own brief observations follow:

The nature of the problem is really closer to social deviance, voyeurism, thuggery and eccentricity than to criminality. Some journalists and PA leaders find it either commercially lucrative or politically satisfying to act in a manner that most Jordanians find peculiar, at best, and disruptive, at worst.

The causes of the problem are multiple and complex: They may include a natural desire to experiment after so many years of living in a relatively constrained or officially directed society, the appeal of profits, the need to release frustrations, the instinct for political battle when the national order allows you new room to engage in ideological

battle, and, perhaps, the biological need for both wild excitement or rigid conformity as a coping mechanism during times of severe and swift change. Another cause, from the government side, may be the novelty of having to get used to and live with PA leaderships and publications that are exercising their new freedoms in a democratising society.

The extent of the problem is relatively manageable, if we accept that it is permissible to be different but not to ravage society's collective morality, and that it is permissible to oppose but not to blackmail others into opposing with you. Or, as the prime minister put it nicely, we accept criticism, opposition and the need for reform, but not national destruction or harm.

The consequences of the problem are not clear. Are the press and PAs merely irritating, discourteous and slightly embarrassing, or are they dangerous, socially jarring, politically polarising, and a real threat to the country?

It is important to identify something of a national consensus on these four points, as a prelude to formulating the most appropriate response. Changing the laws is one option, but a bad one. The best response, I would suggest, is to strengthen the judicial system and allow the courts to redress the imbalances, distortions and extremes that His Majesty has complained about and that the majority of Jordanians almost certainly agree with.

We have to exert much effort to make sure that our judicial system is as fast, fair and efficient as humanly possible, and then we have to give it the opportunity to make the decisions that the executive branch has tended to make in the past. After all, laws and regulations already exist regarding the press and PAs. Even if penalties are modest, the laws, if well used, can achieve their aims of social tranquility, political stability and national development. The existing laws and regulations require better implementation and greater interpretation.

Let's be realistic about our time frame: the Americans and French are still interpreting their laws and constitutions more than two centuries after their first republican stirrings. We should not hesitate to reinterpret our own laws that are less than five years old in some cases, such as the Press and Publications Law.

It would be preferable for the government or a private individual to bring a lawsuit against a publication or a PA that is deemed to be engaging in terrible and offensive things, rather than to tame the alleged offenders by writing a more constricting new law. If we want to protect democracy, we can best do so by giving the judiciary a greater role in interpreting the existing laws, so that we can continue to generate a national consensus that is validated by the four core elements of our governance system: the King, the executive branch, the legislature and the judiciary. A law that is introduced by the government, passed by Parliament, approved by the King, and then interpreted by the courts is stronger and more impressive than a law that has gone through only three of these four steps.

My second objection to dealing with the press and PAs via stricter new laws is that it creates a bad precedent of making laws dependent on current ideological positions or social behaviour of assorted elements within Jordanian society. Laws then become seasonal instruments of the changing political inclinations of governments, rather than permanent, defining platforms of our entire society's norms, rights and standards. If the professional associations had supported the peace process, would there be no need to change the laws? What does this then tell us about

our laws and our attitude towards them?

The larger issue is one that I have mentioned before, and that remains substantially underaddressed today in Jordan and the rest of the Arab World: who decides? We are dealing here with two related elements: political rights and social values. Publishing press reports about a baby with three feet or about illicit sexual liaisons is about social values. Threatening Jordanian professionals with forced unemployment if they support the peace process is about political rights. Both these issues have to be resolved through a process that takes into account the sentiments and talents of the widest possible cross-section of Jordanian society.

Historically, Jordanian society has been shielded from the worst ravages of modern Arab autocracy by the moderating influence of the monarchy. If we had not had the monarchy to lead and to temper the possible excesses of the executive branch, we probably would have long ago drowned in a deluge of statutes and other symbols of frenzied political deification. The statue incident did not emanate from a local historical vacuum, emanated from a tradition of sporadic executive branch intemperance that is itself a consequence of often unchecked political and economic power.

That is why, two centuries ago, they rejected statutory and deification as components of political culture in the USA and France, and why last week we in Jordan took a nifty, similar measure. That is also why it is imperative to get the three branches of our government working in synchronisation with the monarchy in addressing our problems and challenges, rather than leaving the executive branch to lead the way and to change the laws whenever it feels the need, the urge, or the inclination to do so.

The two core values of democratisation, in my view, are a) representative or participatory government that is accountable and pluralistic, and b) government that is run through several different branches that check and balance one another, in order to avoid abuse of power or tyranny. It would be very appropriate if, having rejected deification of individuals via statutory, we would subsequently also reject deification of entire branches of government. We have genuine, legitimate problems to address in the press and PAs. The mechanism we use to agree on how to address them is more important than the measures we take in the end. This moment calls for great prudence. It is also probably the first real test of the prime minister's qualitative commitment to and appreciation of the democratisation process that he so valiantly inaugurated in 1989, upon the instructions of King Hussein.

It is dramatically ironic that the same prime minister should now face the complicated challenge of how to deal with the sporadic excesses of a few people who have been emboldened by the democratisation process that he helped to launch. This process of gradual democratisation and liberalisation has sustained itself primarily because of several factors that are relevant again today. It was based on a broad national consensus enshrined in the National Charter, it has been continuously prodded and encouraged by King Hussein and others in the national leadership, and it has been substantiated by an increasing number of dynamic institutions at the grassroots level. In other words, an important combination of impulses far beyond the executive and legislative branches of government played very important roles in bringing us to where we are; that same combination probably has an equally important role to play in keeping us moving in the same direction.

The time has come for Israel to make up its mind

By William Pfaff

PARIS — Yitzhak Rabin was a victim of Israel's divisions, but also of its indecision. Some Israelis are determined to create a greater Israel. Some are content with a smaller Israel, if yielding land to the dispossessed Palestinians will give Israel peace.

The Oslo agreements, ceding Gaza and parts of the West Bank to the PLO, have been applied at a dilatory pace and in a tortured manner that has reinforced Israeli and Arab opponents of compromise.

The murdered prime minister and his foreign minister, Shimon Peres, could not bring themselves to confront the extremist colonists implanted in territories claimed by the Palestinians. They balked

at accepting the logic of the course to which they had committed themselves.

Their approach to the problem of the colonies has been dilatory and irresolute. The colonists and their allies possess quite the opposite qualities. They believe with all their hearts that God has given them a mission to occupy and hold forever all the biblical Holy Land.

In the 1960s the ultra-Orthodox movement was allied with Labour and was politically moderate. In the years that followed the 1967 war, power passed to a younger generation increasingly intolerant, intransigent in its views, reinforced in this by an emigration of extremist American Jews, some of them preaching indiscriminate violence against all Arabs. The colonies were ex-

panded because Likud was determined to keep the West Bank territories for political and security reasons. It was politically inhibited in what it did by its economic and military dependence on the United States, but settlement of the West Bank steadily continued with official backing. This "created facts" on the ground in the occupied territories (and in Jerusalem itself) which Likud's successor governments were expected to be unable to reverse.

Until now they have not tried. Under the present agreements expanding PLO autonomy in the West Bank, Israel is recalling its army from certain areas but leaving behind the colonists, who live in fortified settlements with Israeli troops permanently on guard. This is not only a

provocative situation, tending to subvert the fragile PLO-Israeli agreements that already exist, but also one which a realistic judgment says cannot last.

The fundamental issues between Israel and the PLO still have not been addressed: Jerusalem's status, borders, the return of refugees, the fate of the colonies.

The Rabin government delayed the process in part for electoral motives. Already trailing in voter polls in the lead-up to Knesset elections a year from now, Labour has been afraid to do anything that would further upset an uneasy electorate. But Mr. Rabin's murder now has dramatically changed that situation.

The argument is made that Mr. Peres has a fleeting moment in which he could

take radical and decisive action to get a full agreement with the Palestinians, doing so before next year's elections, so as to present voters with peace as a fait accompli — so that voters will know that if they reject Labour they are rejecting peace itself.

But the problem no longer is simply political. A significant minority in Israel opposes peace on any attainable terms. It has demonstrated that it is capable of killing Israeli leaders who attempt to make peace with the PLO.

These extremists now potentially represent an Israeli version of the Irish Republican Army, or the Secret Army Organisation that waged war against Charles de Gaulle after he gave French Algeria its freedom. Armed struggle in Israel between Israelis is

possible. During four decades and a half, Israelis lived with the permanent threat and recurrent reality of war with Arab neighbours. That threat now has lifted. The presence of Mr. Rabin's funeral of King Hussein, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak, and other officials from Arab countries, as well as six members of the Palestinian autonomy government, attests to that.

The threat now lies within. Can Israel reconcile its citizens who want peace with those who believe that God forbids Israel to compromise with its enemies? Will Mr. Peres respond as de Gaulle responded, saying that the nation's common interest must prevail? That now is the question.

Los Angeles Times.

Customary law is anti-nuclear

By Jeremy J. Stone

WASHINGTON — Neither the anti-nuclear states nor the nuclear weapon states contesting at the International Court of Justice hearings on the legality of the use of nuclear weapons will describe to the court the obscure nuclear doctrine that it needs to know.

This doctrine, the Negative Security Assurance, shows that "state practice" does not support the introduction of nuclear weapons into conventional hostilities, and hence that the court could declare such action illegal under international law.

The United States, Britain, France and Russia have undertaken, in parallel negative-security assurances, not to use nuclear weapons against all but three non-nuclear states so long as these states do not attack in "alliance or association" with a nuclear

state. (The three significant non-nuclear states not covered, because they refuse to sign the non-proliferation treaty, are India, Israel and Pakistan).

The fifth nuclear power, China, for its part, has undertaken never to use nuclear weapons first against any state.

This loophole for attacks made in conjunction with nuclear powers, designed originally to deter North Korea from invading South Korea, is now anachronistic since Pyongyang's aggression would no longer be backed by China or Russia.

Nor are the other states of concern to the United States (Libya, Iran and Iraq) going to wage attacks on U.S. forces in association with a nuclear power. And what non-nuclear states are going to attack Britain, France or Russia, in association with a nuclear state?

Are the five avowed nuclear

powers seriously threatening to introduce nuclear weapons into conventional hostilities with each other? They are not.

The case of NATO vs. the Soviet Union was the only counterexample. But the Soviet Union having become a non-Communist Russia, and its conventional superiority having turned into conventional impotence, NATO defence ministers, if asked to testify, would spark a storm of criticism if they asserted publicly that nuclear first use was still a necessary doctrine.

And could Russia really fear overwhelming conventional attack by China in the Far East? That is just wild speculation.

Israel, Pakistan or India might, in extremis, introduce nuclear weapons into conventional hostilities, but none dates proclaim this right — indeed, none dares admit publicly that it has

nuclear weapons or latent nuclear "capability." (And while they are not covered by the Negative Security Assurance, none of them can credibly fear first use of nuclear weapons against them by a nuclear power).

In sum, among the 17,955 pairs that 190 states can generate, the threat of first use in conventional hostilities applies, in today's world, to no more than half a dozen hypothetical and very extreme cases.

The desuetude into which the threat of first use of nuclear weapons has fallen is of great importance. Combined with a sense of "state obligation," international lawyers will tell you, this state practice can be construed as customary law. Accordingly, the court could declare that such law exists, in its advisory opinion requested by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Since the laws of war are in part a function of the "dictates of the public conscience," this sense of state obligation can be seen all about us. The trend of decisions on weapons of mass destruction has been clear — in the evolving law concerning inhumane weapons, in the ever tighter constructions on use and possession of chemical and biological weapons, and in the periodic votes in the General Assembly that, by large majorities, condemn the use of nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, under the non-proliferation treaty's Article VI, the nuclear states undertook the legal obligation to rid themselves of possession of nuclear weapons through disarmament — precisely to prevent such use.

The purpose of the rare first-use reservations by nuclear states is understandable — to deter life-or-death threats to states.

The related doctrines are obscure precisely because states fear, in this climate of public opinion, even to enunciate this threat.

We are that close to a world in which no state can permit itself to introduce nuclear weapons into conventional hostilities. Accordingly, it is well within the mandate of the International Court of Justice to proclaim that "the use of any weapons of mass destruction such as chemical, biological or nuclear weapons is, and ought to be declared, illegal under international law."

In this day and age, only those who violate that declaratory proposition need fear a nuclear response.

The writer is president of the Federation of American Scientists, founded by World War II atomic scientists. He contributed this comment to the International Herald Tribune.

Features

Party accord sets stage for new Hungary media law

By Duncan Shiels
Reuter

BUDAPEST — After five years of acrimonious debate, Hungary's parliament looks set to finally approve plans to privatise national television and radio.

All six parliamentary parties have agreed on the basic principles of a media bill to be presented to parliament and some say the legislation would be in place by the new year.

Critics say that despite the agreement, debate on the controversial legislation could still get bogged down in detail.

"We are now very optimistic that it will be possible for the bill to be passed this year," said Andras Bard, spokesman for the main governing party, the socialists.

The draft bill offers 10-year concessions on the second of two state channels, MTV 2, and on a currently unused third frequency, Channel 58, which under Hungary's former communist government broadcast Soviet television.

MTV1 and the state-owned satellite Channel Duna TV, which broadcasts to Hungarian-speaking minorities in neighbouring countries, will remain in state hands while a second public satellite channel is to be set up by December next year.

This is a crucial compromise that has made the all-party agreement possible.

The bill, which required the agreement of all parties, had long been stalled, partly over the privatisation of MTV2. The largest opposition party, the Hungarian Democratic Forum, wanted both main national channels to stay public but has now accepted the creation of a second state-owned satellite channel as a compromise.

Another bone of contention has been the degree of control government may exercise over media it will still own.

A frequency moratorium introduced in 1989 by Hungary's reform communists, who were voted out of power shortly afterwards, froze the allocation of national broadcasting frequencies until a law was in place to prevent the media falling into unwelcome hands.

The six parties have now agreed that MTV, Hungarian radio and Duna TV will be run by three independent public foundations, headed by representatives of the parliamentary parties, professional

organisations, trade unions and churches.

Members of parliament are under considerable pressure to sign the bill into law, according to political consultant Atila Ledenyi.

"With this all-party deal, the public assumes the bickering is finally over. If they start picking on the details in parliament, people aren't going to like it."

Opposition parties have promised not to deliberately block the bill but say that current discussions of the 1996 budget will not allow enough time to complete the fine detail by the end of the year, as promised by the government.

The opposition Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ) said: "Just because we gave our political support by signing the six-party agreement doesn't mean the talking is over." Privately-owned Hungarian television will not have it easy.

Ledenyi says that after almost a decade of access to foreign private TV via satellite and cable, Hungarians have become used to slick foreign programming.

"We are talking about an audience that knows private TV. They already have private international channels and are finally looking forward to a commercial channel that will broadcast in their own language."

Some terms of the 10-year concessions are also controversial. The government reserves the right in 2006 to decide which of the three national channels will remain in state hands and could in theory decide to re-nationalise MTV2 or Channel 58 and privatise MTV1.

In addition, the winner of the Channel 58 concession will be obliged to upgrade the technology to extend coverage from the present 30 per cent of the population to 85 per cent.

Critics of the bill say that with such strings attached, 10 years is too short a time to offer an adequate return on investment.

However, Peter Molnar, media spokesman for the Free Democrats, junior partners in the ruling coalition, says investors should not worry because those who take a concession and use it well will have good chances of extending it.

Mr. Ledenyi believes the greater problem for potential investors will be to find enough advertisers.

"With five national channels for such a small country there could be too much space to fill," he says.

Sharaa: Peres man of peace

(Continued from page 1)

Referring to concerns that radical leaders of the Lebanese resistance, led by the pro-Iranian Hizbollah party which is fighting Israeli troops in south Lebanon, would carry the fight to Israel after peace was signed, Mr. Sharaa said: "The Americans and Israelis fear and talk of the possibility of a schism in the resistance, that there would be radical leaders who reject stopping resistance operations because the goal is (to liberate) Jerusalem not only south Lebanon."

"But if the result the resistance is seeking is achieved — meaning the liberation of the land from occupation — then Syria can play its role to convince the resistance that its aims have been achieved," he said.

Syria, has 35,000 troops in Lebanon and is the country's main power broker. It wields influence over Hizbollah (party of God) and other Lebanese and Palestinian factions fighting Israeli troops occupying a border zone in the south.

Engineers stage protest

(Continued from page 1)

at politicising the associations to the detriment of the profession itself and overlooking the general interest," the statement added. "Were it not for the political circumstances that prevailed then, our aspired goals would have been achieved."

But from now on, the engineers stressed during the gathering, they will not relinquish their rights. While they called for a separation of politics from professional work, they said they wanted to maintain the gains they acquired during the years. They appealed for an amendment to the existing laws but insisted that changes should go hand in hand with the preservation of their rights.

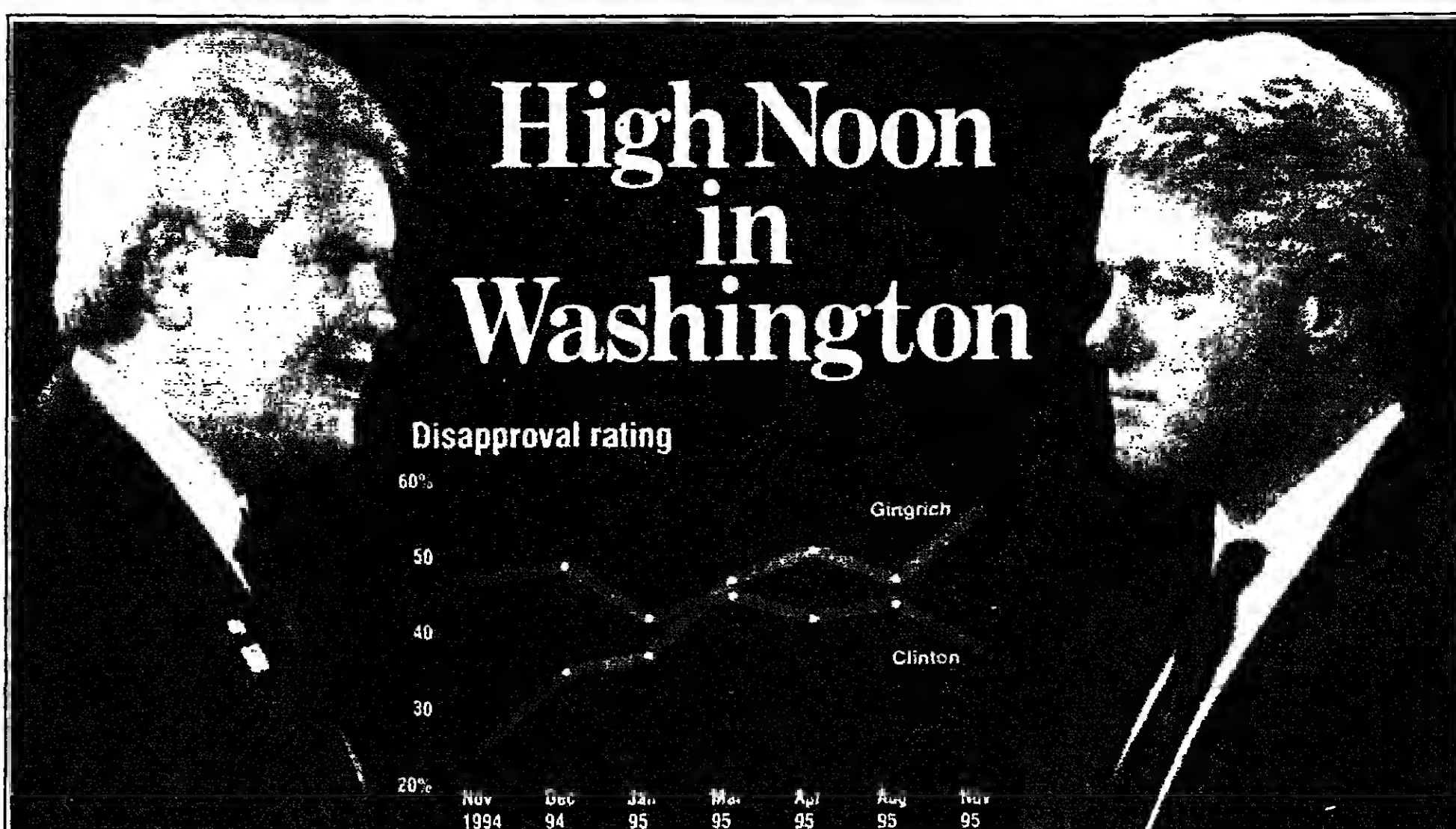
"It is time that we put an end to all the malpractices, indifference that have negatively influenced the majority," said Ali Obaidat. "The future of the association is in danger. Today is your day... defend your association... defend your country."

Another speaker, Basem

Zawadeh, accused the successive administrative bodies of the Engineers Association of having been involved in politics and of having used the name of the association for their own political objectives.

"Although there are now political parties and a legislative authority and various forums from which individuals can practise politics, the politicised minority have used the association for their purposes until it deviated from its assigned role," Mr. Zawadeh said. "We as a majority, have to make a move to preserve our rights and our gains especially the pension fund and health insurance."

One of the participants, Ibrahim Hyayat, called on the majority to be more active. He said that most of the decisions and resolutions taken by the general assembly were unconstitutional since they were not approved by the majority of the engineers but remain accepted because the majority does not attend.



Rupert Cornwell describes the great showdown between warrior Newt Gingrich and healer Bill Clinton over their competing visions of America's future

These include some of the most distinguished careers in Washington and quite possibly the presidency itself — but beyond even that, two competing visions of society. A year before he faces re-election, Mr. Clinton has established himself as defender of an old Democratic idea of America, tracing its roots to Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and Lyndon Johnson's vision of a Great Society. Ranged against it is the "Republican Revolution" of 1994, whose walking embodiment is Gingrich.

The collision has been inevitable ever since Nov. 8 last year, when the Republicans rode a wave of disgust with business-as-usual in Washington to capture control of Congress for the first time in 40 years. For once, an American political party had a manifesto, the Contract with America, setting out to roll back government, return powers to the states and — though no one paid much attention at the time — to balance the federal budget in seven years. And for once, in Gingrich, a political party had a man absolutely determined to push its "contract" through.

In technical terms, the present impasse is a nightmare to explain: a jumble of such obscure notions as continuing resolutions, 13 separate appropriations bills and Section B Medicare — not to mention continuing expert budget projections stretching into the next millennium, which in fact may offer ground for the compromise that must finally come. Peer through the forest and pick out the trees, though, and the struggle becomes clear cut, and titanic.

Behind the bickering lie two competing concepts of a government's role in society. Clinton's vetoes this week of bills that would have given the government temporary authority to borrow and spend money — and which have sent 800,000 federal workers home — were but a tiny forerunner of what is to come. Any day now we will get to the meat of the matter: the giant "reconciliation bill" which the Republicans are preparing to send to the White House, containing their plan to cut planned spending by \$1,000bn. and taxes by \$245bn. and balance the budget — all by 2002. Far

more than a bill, this is the bible of the New Republicanism. Mr. Clinton will surely veto it on the spot. In doing so, he will set out the ground on which the 1996 election will be fought.

To measure the moment, consider what is in truth a sideshow to the main event: the predicament of Bob Dole. Careers come scarcely more distinguished than his: senator for 27 years, minority leader, majority leader, presidential candidate in 1980 and 1988, and now favourite for the Republican nomination next year. But at his obligatory appearances with Gingrich to rail budget inaction on the White House, the majority leader's twitchy discomfort is plain to see. Left to a deal-making pragmatist such as Bob Dole, the dispute would long since have been settled. Instead, he watches in the knowledge that his chances of victory in 1996 do not lie in his hands. He may be the Republican candidate, but Gingrich, not he, is Republicanism made flesh. And Gingrich, to put it mildly, is not loved.

A year after the 1994 election, political Washington may still be besotted by him. Not so the country at large, ever more alienated by the Gingrich that his devotees in the capital somehow overlook — the harsh voice that tears apart opponents as a pneumatic drill rips up asphalt, the lack of evident compassion for the needy of society, his doctrinaire glibness, on occasion his sheer silliness. Twelve months ago, he offered refreshing as-rings, and new ideas. Now, more frequently, he gets on people's nerves. No U.S. politician has higher disapproval ratings. Gingrich muses of a presidential run, but if the polls are right, he would be trounced not only by Mr. Clinton but also in the Republican primaries, supposedly dominated by the very right-wing activists who hang on his every utterance. Rather, this battle over the budget is Gingrich's own presidential election.

And thus unfolds a classic contest between two political stereotypes, the warrior against the healer. To prevail, both must borrow from the persona of the other. Mr. Clinton has to show that, contrary to public perception, there are principles he will not abandon, that there is steel, not just putty, in his spine. The

task of Gingrich the warrior is exactly opposite — to show that he cares about ordinary people, that he can deliver a deal as well as a soundbite.

So far at least, Mr. Clinton is winning. He has the advantage of being a single voice from the pulpit of the White House, speaking "on behalf of the American people" — a far more potent formula than the multiperson Republican choir wheeled out to respond in the Congressional press room. Skillfully, he has defined the argument, playing the Republicans in general, and Gingrich in particular, as extremist ideologues bent on destroying the Medicare and Medicaid federal health schemes for the elderly and the poor, removing the welfare safety net and doing away with basic work safety and environmental regulations — all for tax cuts that will benefit the rich. Clinton's tactics are working. By a margin of five to one, according to a poll yesterday, the public blames Congress rather than the president for the country's troubles.

But the equation may change if the deadlock continues. Until now, Mr. Clinton has got away with simply saying no. With the reconciliation bill, he will have to come up with ideas of his own, and explain how he plans to balance the budget, a goal as unattainable as motherhood. If the public starts to shift blame in his direction, today's resolve may weaken. If so, it would not be the making of a President Gingrich. But it could mean the end of President Clinton.

The Independent.

Reconciliation a distant prospect in Rwanda

By Elif Kaban
Reuter

KIGALI — "Wake up, take up your arms, go strike the enemy, keep fighting, victory is near, wake up, child soldiers wake up, adult soldiers forward to Kigali."

Waking up for the first time in Rwanda's capital Kigali to the sudden rhythmic stamping of soldiers' boots and their war songs at five each morning is not for the faint-hearted.

A neighbour later explains apologetically: "Our soldiers are doing their exercise. Did you like the tune this morning?"

As the sun rises behind Kigali's hills, troops of the Tutsi-led Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) jog through the city. A soldier in each squad keeps up the beat with a piercing whistle.

War songs at dawn are hard to fit in with the message of reconciliation preached by Rwanda's new

government since last year's genocide when up to a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates were hacked to death by Hutu militant troops, militiamen and mobs.

But reconciliation is proving a tough task for a nation of survivors from the Tutsi minority and Hutu majority, each exiled successively in political turmoil and wars since the 1950s.

In Kigali it is hard to find a single Rwandan who lost no family in the 1994 slaughter. Children as young as seven years old admit taking part in the slaughter and languish in prison.

"The world assumes Rwandans are trees you can nail together or blocks of bricks you can stick together. We are talking human beings. How can they expect us to forget?" says a government official.

On Kigali's avenues lined with bougainvillea and hibiscus, children and

young women with missing limbs or hands are common, survivors of one of the century's worst mass killings.

Government offices are barren: computers, copiers and other equipment were looted by officials of the overthrown Hutu government.

Deputy Social Affairs Minister Theodore Simburudali sits in his office, the wind blowing in through the smashed windows.

"We have no money to pay our staff," he says. He earns \$65 a month, enough to buy 20 kg of meat. Most people are jobless and even the employed earn a fraction of their needs.

Of \$1.1 billion pledged by donors to rebuild the tiny Central African country, the government received barely a drop.

"If you count the millions of dollars passing here everyday, what has it done for our people's suffering?"

asks colonel Franck Mugambage, head of the president's cabinet office.

Such resentment is easy to understand, warring down Kigali's hilly streets in costly four-wheel-drive vehicles and dancing the night away under the pink neon lights of the disco Cadillac with walkie-talkie handsets on their hips.

"A lot of foreigners who couldn't find a job in Europe or America flocked to Rwanda. Refugees is a lucrative business," says government spokesman Major Wilson Rutayisire Bitterly.

There are no civilian police and arrests are the work of badly paid young soldiers with their own discipline problems.

"We don't have a single policeman. We don't have enough typewriters, paper or cars. Of course, we have to rely on the army," says Deputy Interior Minister

Theoneste Mutsindashyaka.

"Two-thirds of our soldiers are related to genocide victims. There are acts of revenge, but given the scale of the tragedy that befell us, our military is super-disciplined," he adds.

Most soldiers appear well-behaved, but there are signs that some act with complete military impunity although the government is at pains to stress that these are only isolated incidents.

A Tutsi taxi driver home from exile in Burundi asks for three times the normal fare for a trip. Having failed to get enough, he later turns up with his gun-toting soldier brother.

U.N. human rights officials say more than 20 people still come to their office in Kigali daily to report disappearances, rapes, arbitrary arrests and other human rights abuses.

One incident under investigation is that of a

woman of mixed ethnicity alleged to have been snatched by a soldier from a market at gunpoint, taken to an empty house, raped for two days and made to sign a statement saying she took part in the genocide.

The woman has a doctor's report confirming she was raped but says she is too scared to report the soldier to the authorities.

"If he finds out, he will kill me," she whispers in utter fear.

"Reconciliation is a meaningless word when the organisers of the genocide live openly abroad," says Mr. Mutsindashyaka.

"We have two million genocide suspects abroad and a million inside the country. We must talk to these people and work with these people because we don't have evidence against them. All the witnesses are dead. It'll take 1,000 years to try them all."

Peres says Israel committed to peace

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Rabin wanted to secure agreement first on security arrangements, to accompany an eventual withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Mr. Ross said before leaving Israel: "I am very pleased by the nature of the discussion. It was thorough, intensive and very useful. I am convinced that Israel wants to move these talks forward."

The United States has been acting as a go-between, while direct negotiations have only been held so far between chiefs-of-staff, ambassadors and delegations.

Mr. Ross may return to Israel and Syria shortly after the new Israeli cabinet is ratified on Wednesday and ahead of a visit by Mr. Peres to Washington.

An Israeli government official said Mr. Ross had been hoping to fix a meeting between Mr. Peres and Farouk

Sharaa, on the sidelines of the European-Mediterranean conference in Barcelona at the end of the month.

But Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khudjam also ruled out raising the level of the negotiations, in an interview with Radio Monte-Carlo, monitored in Cyprus.

Bosnia talks inch on

(Continued from page 1)

Foreign Ministry official predicted there would be no agreement announced in Ohio.

"I am not optimistic that we will have a deal today in Dayton but I am confident that this peace process will end up with a solution," Mirza Hajric, a foreign ministry spokesman said Monday.

The main lines of a peace accord have been agreed, but there are differences remaining concerning the map, according to reports here.

In Sarajevo, a Bosnian



Ajax Amsterdam Jari Litmanen (centre) is challenged by FC Groninger players Arjan Blauw and Roel Liefder (right) during the Dutch first division (AFP photo)

Barcelona take top spot in Spain

PARIS (Agencies) — Barcelona shot to the top of the Spanish table at the weekend but may have paid a high price for their success.

Barcelona grabbed the lead from Atletico Madrid on goal difference after a 3-0 win over Albacete thanks to goals from Romanians Gheorghe Hagi and Gheorghe Popescu, and Croatian Robert Prosinecki.

But, on the down side, Prosinecki was sent off for handball shortly after scoring, and Hagi needed four stitches in his head after clashing with an opponent.

In another eventful match, Real Madrid upset arch-rivals and Spanish league leaders Atletico Madrid 1-0 Atletico's first loss in 13 league matches this season.

Gonzalez Raul's ninth minute goal was enough to out Atletico, who were reduced to 10 men when Jose Luis Camarero was sent off in the 54th minute for a second bookable offence.

Referee Diaz Vega had a busy time as he showed nine yellow cards and one red in the fixture, watched by 107,000 spectators in the Bernabeu stadium.

Espanol later joined Barcelona and Atletico on 30 points with a winner away to Merida four minutes from time from their Paraguayan striker Benitez, but they have a poorer goal differential than the other two.

Meanwhile it was a good night for Sevilla as Betis won 3-1 at home to Real Sociedad and Sevilla won 1-0 at Real Zaragoza.

Parma's 17-year-old de-

butants keeper Gianluigi Buffon kept AC Milan at bay to ensure Italy's two premier teams remain neck-and-neck in the title race.

Milan, who drew 0-0 at Parma despite welcoming back World Cup star Roberto Baggio and Liberian George Weah from injury, could not find a breakthrough against Parma's substitute keeper.

Buffon, who played in place of Luca Bucci, excelled himself against the former European champions and there is still nothing to separate Italy's two premier teams.

Both sides have 21 points after 10 matches with an identical goal difference of 16 for and nine against.

As the leading two were deadlocked, Juventus, who have started the season slowly, gained some ground.

Alessandro Del Piero scored for the defending champions, just seventh at the start of the day, in a 1-0 win over Fiorentina to foil their chances of going top with a win.

And Lazio took advantage of Fiorentina's misfortune to oust them from third spot after a 2-1 home victory over Cremonese.

Hollano's Aron Winter and Pierluigi Casiraghi put Lazio two up before a Riccardo Maspero penalty pulled one back for the visitors.

Paris Saint Germain are guaranteed top spot in the French championship at the halfway stage of the season following their 0-0 draw at Lille, while Auxerre vaulted into second place by routing St. Etienne 5-0 away.

Metz, the early pacesetters, drew 0-0 at Guingamp to squeeze into third place ahead of Lens, who also had a goalless draw at Montpellier.

PSG are four points clear of Auxerre after 18 matches, one away from the 19th round of fixtures signalling the halfway stage of the season.

Following their loss in the Brittany derby at Rennes, Guingamp failed to bounce back and beat Metz, who stopped the rot after a run of three defeats.

appearance as a late substitute.

Riedle was on target almost immediately as Dortmund extended their unbeaten run to 11 matches.

Bayern Munich were meanwhile welcoming back Lothar Matthaus after 10 months away, and were convincing winners at the Olympic stadium with goals from Jurgen Klinsmann and Alexander Zickler.

Matthaus, who tore his Achilles tendon, played the full 90 minutes in a comeback match watched by 63,000.

EUROPEAN SOCCER

Metz's well organised defence, marshalled by skipper Sylvain Kastendeuch, kept Guingamp at bay, though the home side did have one great chance.

Meanwhile Nantes thanked Chad's Japhet N'Dorman for a late equaliser as they drew 2-2 at home to Rennes.

Leaders Borussia Dortmund and Bayern Munich stamped their authority in the German Bundesliga as they widened the gap from the chasing pack.

Champions Dortmund, who just hung on to win the title last season, thrashed SC Karlsruhe 4-1, while Bayern Munich beat Werder Bremen 2-0. Both the leading sides had heroes to welcome back.

Michael Zorc, Jurgen Kohler and Matthias Sammer got on the scoresheet for Dortmund before Karlheinz Riedle, returning after six months away with a cruciate ligament injury, made his

appearance as a late substitute.

Riedle was on target almost immediately as Dortmund extended their unbeaten run to 11 matches.

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Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship

JTTF chairman expresses pride in event

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two days remain for the conclusion of the Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship and the top four teams are preparing for a final showdown for the title.

While the 16 participating teams had a day off Tuesday, visiting the Dead Sea and places of interest in the capital, organisers were busy with technical details related to the hosting of such a regional championship.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Jordan Table Tennis Federation (JTTF) Chairman Ismat Kurdi, expressed his pride in the tournament's success adding that the JTTF hoped this would be a turning point for the sport in the Kingdom.

"This is the single largest gathering of Arab teams at such a championship. This fact was a strong incentive for the JTTF as we hosted the first Arab clubs championship."

"The JTTF wanted to organise the championship at this time when Jordan is celebrating His Majesty King Hussein's birthday. Because of this fact, Arab teams made it a

point to ensure the participation of their top stars. It was only Algeria who pulled out at the last moment because of technical difficulties."

Dr. Kurdi noted that the JTTF had cooperated with participating Jordanian clubs to the maximum extent to ensure their best preparation. "The JTTF made sure the Chinese coach of the Kingdom's national teams would be available to train each team twice weekly. In turn we felt clubs had a strong and serious interest in their teams. We feel table tennis in Jordan is making a turning point."

During the championship, the Executive Committee of the Arab Federation held its meeting as several high ranking officials of the game attended the event.

While teams are paying their own expenses at the five-day championship, the JTTF is hosting certain officials of each country as well as members of the Arab Federation. Dr. Kurdi expressed his appreciation of the sponsors of the JTTF, like the ART, the Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. and the Arab Potash Company. He also added that Al Ithlah School made available its buses to transport the athletes of the 16 teams.

Benzart's hopes dashed by Egyptian teams

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Women's team of Benzart Club is Tunisia's representative in the 5th Arab clubs championship. Despite the fact that the team has already lost its chance for the title, their results were impressive and proved they are a strong contender for any upcoming championships.

While Egyptian club Al

Zamalek won the first title in 1991, compatriots Al Ahli dominated the next three championships and are on their way to their fourth title.

Benzart came to the championship hoping that Al Ahli's reign would end as they were represented by a new lineup and missed their top players Nihal Mshref and Wisam Abdul Fatah.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Benzart's

coach Tawfiq Fliss said his team "came to Amman eyeing the title."

He added however that their opponents could not be underestimated.

That proved to be true. While Benzart face titleholders Al Ahli Tuesday morning, they practically lost their title chances when they lost 3-0 to Al Zamalek. Competition leaders Al Ahli had shaken off their strongest contenders, compatriots Al

Zamalek 3-0.

Benzart's team includes 21-year-old Sonia Tweety who came in second in the African Games, Jihan Bilkayeh and Afaf Nuwar.

Fliss praised the Jordanian teams and said they showed considerable improvement. "Jordanian players are clever players. They probably lack experience and cannot advance more because of little exposure to international events," he said.

Zamalek, Ahli clubs qualify to semis

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Zamalek today join Ahli clubs from Egypt, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in the semifinal round of the Arab Clubs Table Tennis Championship which concludes Wednesday.

Titleholders Al Ahli of Egypt topped Group A after beating Saudi Arabia's Ahli 3-1 while Al Zamalek topped Group B after beating Qatar's Al Ahli 3-1.

Egypt's Al Ahli will now face Qatar's Al Ahli while Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli take on Al Zamalek in the semifinal matches which start at the Sports Palace Tuesday morning.

In matches deciding places 5 to 8 Jordan's Al Jazireh will face compatriots Al Orthodoxi while Kuwait's Al Jahra' meet Lebanon's Al Ma'ni.

Late Sunday evening Al Orthodoxi scored their first win 3-0 over Palestine who finished last in Group A

while Jordan's Al Jazireh finished third in Group A after beating Al Khartoum of Sudan 3-1.

The men's semifinals will be preceded by the women's matches which start at 9 a.m. when Jordan's Al Orthodoxi face Al Zamalek while Amman meet Lebanon's Homenmen.

Titleholders and competition leaders Al Ahli face Tunisia's Benzart in the final match at 4 p.m.

Al Ahli's women's team seem set to retain their fourth consecutive title after their players displayed an impressive form defeating Al Zamalek 3-0. Al Zamalek had also defeated Benzart with the same result.

In the men's competition too, Titleholders Al Ahli and Al Zamalek, the only unbeaten teams, seem set for a showdown for the title. Al Ahli seem capable of beating Qatar while Al Zamalek are expected to overcome Saudi Arabia.

Women's team standings

	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
Al Ahli (Egypt)	4	—	12	1	8
Zamalek (Egypt)	3	1	9	3	6
Benzart (Tunisia)	3	1	9	6	6
Amman (Jordan)	1	3	6	10	2
Orthodoxi (Jordan)	1	3	5	11	2
Homenmen (Lebanon)	—	4	2	2	—

Final standings of men's teams-round one

Group A					
	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
*Al Ahli (Egypt)	4	—	12	—	8
*Al Ahli (S. Arabia)	3	1	9	8	6
Jahra' (Kuwait)	2	2	8	9	4
Orthodoxi (Jordan)	1	3	7	9	2
Palestine	—	4	2	13	—

Group B					
	W	L	GF	GA	Pts
*Zamalek (Egypt)	4	—	12	1	8
*Al Ahli (Qatar)	3	1	10	6	6
Jazireh (Jordan)	2	2	8	8	4
Ma'ni (Lebanon)	1	3	6	9	2
Khartoum (Sudan)	—	4	—	12	2

* Advanced to semifinal round

Becker still hungry for success

FRANKFURT (R) — When Boris Becker won Wimbledon for the first time as a teenager 10 years ago he never thought he would still be earning his living hitting a ball across a tennis net in his late 20s.

Becker is not only still playing as he approaches his 28th birthday next week but proved emphatically on Sunday that he can still win major titles with his third triumph at the ATP tour world championship.

The Germany's 7-6, 6-4, 7-0 victory over American Michael Chang in the final of the season-ending event was Becker's first major triumph since he won the Frankfurt championship in 1992.

The 1995 Wimbledon finalist's last Grand Slam victory came in 1991 when he won the Australian Open.

The powerful-built Becker is no longer the fresh-faced 17-year-old who became the youngest player in more than 100 years to win Wimbledon in 1985.

Now a devoted father, the red-headed star is one of the most experienced players on the circuit.

But the hunger for success is still there for the multi-millionaire despite the fact he could retire tomorrow and never have to worry about

money ever again.

"To tell you the truth, I didn't think 10 years ago that I would still be playing," he said. "Those first couple of years so many things happened to me professionally and in my private life that I didn't think I could last."

"I didn't think that the desire for tennis could be greater than the loss of privacy... but somehow I managed to survive. I had my bad years. I had my years when tennis was not my main priority."

"But in the back of my mind, I never gave up... I never lost that hunger and I think that is the reason why I am still here."

Sunday's victory was an emotional one for Becker. Although he has received often unbearable attention in his homeland in the last decade, Becker has made the Frankfurt Festival his favourite court in Germany. Becker's home town of Leimen is just a short drive away.

After he failed to qualify for the event in 1993, many people started to write him off. There is often talk of his retirement in the German media, but Sunday's superb serve-and-volley performance on the fast court silenced the critics.

Becker said: "This is especially satisfying after I couldn't make the ATP final two years ago and basically the whole world wrote me off already. They started saying I was too old. But then I was 25."

"Time does not stand still. When you have pain in your job before the victories mean more."

The stability of family life with his wife Barbara and young son Noah Gabriel have

certainly played a role in keeping Becker interested in tennis.

Becker still has a goal of becoming the top player in the world rankings, a position he held briefly in 1991.

"As long as I'm a professional I will always have the dream of being number one," he said. "At the moment I can see Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras are that bit better than me. But I will try to get better."

Leading ATP prize-money winners.

1. Pete Sampras (U.S.)	\$4,652,566
2. Boris Becker (Germany)	3,281,108
3. Andre Agassi (U.S.)	2,975,738
4. Michael Chang (U.S.)	2,555,870
5. Thomas Muster (Austria)	2,537,979
6. Goran Ivanisevic (Croatia)	2,152,862
7. Sergi Bruguera (Spain)	1,958,044
8. Yevgeny Kafelnikov (Russia)	1,410,311
9. Wayne Ferreira (South Africa)	1,276,216
10. Thomas Enqvist (Sweden)	1,229,646
11. Jim Courier (U.S.)	1,202,769
12. Alberto Berasategui (Spain)	1,120,272
13. Stefan Edberg (Sweden)	1,110,809
14. Richard Krajicek (Netherlands)	925,822
15. Paul Haarhuis (Netherlands)	908,087
16. Michael Stich (Germany)	853,974
17. Jacco Eltingh (Netherlands)	845,571
18. Todd Woodbridge (Australia)	789,651
19. Daniel Vacek (Czech Republic)	779,806
20. Mark Woodforde (Australia)	772,386

FIFA leaders endorse UEFA reform plans

ZURICH (R) — World soccer leaders on Monday endorsed controversial plans from European soccer body UEFA to reform the structure of the sport.

Meeting at the headquar-

ters of FIFA, the presidents of the six continental confederations adopted a series of measures that would give them more control over running the sport in their own regions.

FIFA General Secretary Sepp Blatter told a news conference after the meeting that under the changes new national associations would have to apply first for membership of their respective

confederation rather than to FIFA.

Confederations would also be responsible for dealing with political interference in the sport and players' transfers within their regions.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR HARSCH & TANNAN HIRSCH
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EAGLE EYES

Neither vulnerable, West deals			
NORTH			
♠ 74			
♥ 194			
♦ 109			
♣ Q J 10 12			
EAST			
♠ 109			
♥ 83			
♦ 875			
♣ 852			
♠ 8765			
SOUTH			
♠ A K Q 852			

trouble dilemma for partner.

The auction was routine except for West opening a four-card major, something unlikely to happen these days. To bid fewer than four spades on the South cards would have been too conspicuous for words.

When everyone followed to three rounds of hearts, West was faced with a problem. If East held the eight of spades, a fourth heart would allow East to ruff with that card and promote West's jack of

trumps to the setting trick, since declarer would have to overruff with a high honor. However, West realized that a stuffuff might be fatal to the defense, so the defender exited safely with the jack of

trumps. Declarer won and started to reel

on trump. After five rounds of spades West discarded a heart and a club and East the three, two and five of diamonds. Now declarer led the last trump and West, reduced to 17 of diamonds and K 9 of clubs, had to decide what to

do. West was down in four cards. West took A K of diamonds and A of clubs.

The blue lay in West's discards. By snuffing first the two and then three of diamonds, East showed an even number of cards in the suit. When East pitched the five of diamonds west, West noted that the four was missing. So declarer conceived that card to South, and blithely discarded the nine of clubs, during the last. Down one.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL: 634144

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Kevin Costner
in
WATERWORLD
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CINEMA TEL: 698238

PLAZA

Denzel Washington
Jene Hackman In
CRIMSON TIDE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677420

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Sylvester Stallone..in
ASSASSINS
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
Adel Imam & Yusra
Birds of the Darkness
Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15

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until further notice

GF	GA	Pts
12	1	8
9	3	6
9	6	6
6	10	2
5	11	2
2	2	1

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GF	GA	Pts
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8	8	4
6	4	2
—	12	2

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Sports

McRae takes lead in RAC Rally

LEEDS (R) — Britain's Colin McRae swept into the lead in the RAC Rally with a commanding display on the opening stage of the second day on Monday.

McRae, chasing the world title, overcame an 11-minute delay to the start of special stage eight at Hamsterley forest in county Durham following the death of a male spectator by poisoning to the fastest time.

McRae clocked 14 minutes 34 seconds for the 16.92-mile all-forest stage to take over the lead by 27 seconds and open up a 43-second advantage over title rival Carlos Sainz of Spain.

The 27-year-old, who reached Sunday night's overnight stop in Leeds with a 14-second cushion, saw that immediately increased as Sainz finished in 15:03.

Overnight leader Tommi Makinen slumped to sixth overall after his Mitsubishi hit suspension and tyre problems which saw him limp to the finish in 16:11.

McRae, who only needs to finish ahead of Subaru teammate Sainz to become Britain's first world rally champion, now leads Sweden's Kenneth Eriksson by 27 seconds in the overall standings.

But McRae, who went into the second day lying third, knows that his advantage could be wiped out on a single stage over the next three days, as demonstrated by Makinen.

The start of rallying was delayed on Monday when a man collapsed and died before the start.

The spectator died, apparently from a heart attack while standing near the end of the eighth special stage at hamsterley forest in county Durham.

Two doctors and a team of paramedics employed by the rally organisers who were stationed nearby tried to save him, but he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Graf caps emotional year with WTA win

NEW YORK (R) — Anke Huber had planned to be enjoying a Caribbean vacation, but she gladly traded the sand and surf for a marathon battle with top-ranked Steffi Graf for the season-ending WTA Tour championship title Sunday.

And while it may have cost her a few Pina Colodas, Huber very nearly won the tournament, stretching her fellow German to five sets before falling 6-1, 2-6, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3 in the final.

The 12th-ranked Huber fell a little short, but her future vacations will be sweeter with the \$250,000 she pocketed, and with the knowledge that she endured several days longer in the season finale than she figured she would.

"I was supposed to be there (in the Caribbean) by the middle of the week," Huber said. "I wanted to go for vacation to the Caribbean, but I didn't know I was going to play until Sunday."

The 20-year-old baseline basher, one of three unseeded finalists in the tournament's history, managed to push the top-ranked Graf around for an exciting two hours, 46 minutes.

Her longevity in the match was all the more astounding considering that she ventured to the court with a bad case of jitters, captured only four points in the first four games, and appeared to be on the verge of being overwhelmed by Graf.

"I was thinking, I hope it doesn't go on like this for three sets," Huber said about her poor start. "I was really, really nervous. I think everybody saw it. It was the first big final like that. I didn't know how to hold the racket in my hand."

One person who noticed Huber's nervous state was her far more experienced opponent.



Top-seeded Steffi Graf of Germany has a blister on her right foot attended to by Kathleen Sloria, the WTA Tour director of sports science and medicine during a break in the first set of the WTA Tour final (AFP photo)

"You could feel she was nervous in the beginning," Graf said. "And you could sense she couldn't find her timing and was probably a little intimidated being in the finals."

But Graf knew Huber had plenty of time to recover. "I thought in myself, it's not going to take long and in the best of five sets, she has time to recover."

Graf was correct in anticipating that Huber, who dismissed fourth seed Mary Pierce and sixth seed Kimiko Date en route to the final, would blossom as the match progressed.

Her nerves calmed, Huber started to play smart tennis, cleverly moving Graf around the court. Graf has been hindered throughout the tournament with serious blisters on her feet.

Huber's record against Graf remains a dismal 0-for-10. But the gap is narrowing. "I shewed myself that maybe I can beat her," Huber said. "I think it was never that close (before). Sure, I showed myself something, but I still didn't win. So it's still missing."

Huber, who will move to 10th in the rankings Monday, has spent much of her career living in Graf's shadow. Indeed, she was dubbed "the next Steffi" upon her arrival on the scene at 15 in 1989.

"It's rough when everybody compared you to Steffi," Huber reflects. "She's somebody special. There's not a second Steffi coming up in the next hundred years, maybe. So it was very tough at the beginning."

Graf has sympathy for Huber given the inevitable comparisons she has had to face. "I'm sure it was at times difficult for her," Graf said. "She has her own style, and I hope that people by now have seen that."

"She goes for her shots and she's running around trying for everything and showing a lot of guts."

"She's a different player," Graf added, pleading Huber's case as "one to really watch for."

Suleymanoglu targets Atlanta history

GUANGZHOU, China (AFP) — Turkish strongman Naim Suleymanoglu has given himself one more chance to become the most successful weightlifter in the history of the sport.

Suleymanoglu, 28, who on Sunday tied Soviet Vasily Alexeev's record of 22 world championships gold medals, said he would retire after the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

"You will see me in the competitions for the last time in the United States next year," he said.

Suleymanoglu equalled Alexeev's string of 22 world championships victories by narrowly edging Valerios Leiondis of Greece in the 64kg category.

In the fierce battle between the two lifters, Leiondis set a world record in the snatch, but still lost the combined title on body weight.

Suleymanoglu competed for Bulgaria until Turkey paid \$1 million for his release and Leiondis is a former Soviet.

After both lifters snatched 145kg on their second attempts, Suleymanoglu opted to try 147.5kg for his last lift, the world record he set at the world championships last year.

After Suleymanoglu had successfully equalled his own record, Leiondis elected to try 148kg, even though only multiples of 2.5kg can be used to decide competition rankings.

Thus despite Leiondis's successful world record attempt, the two lifters finished the snatch tied at 147.5kg. The battle continued in the clean and jerk, with Suleymanoglu lifting 180kg on his first attempt.

Leiondis tried 185kg twice, but failed both times, so with the two lifters tied with combined totals of 327.5kg, the victory went to Suleymanoglu on body weight.

Chinese women continued their dominance with a second world record on Monday. Chen Xiaomin jerked 123.5kg in the 59kg category to erase the old mark set by compatriot Zou Fei at last year's championships in Istanbul, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

Chen, who also holds the combined clean and jerk total of 220kg, set the record — 0.5kg above the previous mark — on her third attempt. Chinese women have won two of the three gold medals so far awarded, with Guan Hong setting a snatch record in the 46kg category on the first day of competition.



Turkish weightlifter Naim Suleymanoglu shows off his trophy after winning the 64kg class at the World Weightlifting Championships in China (AFP photo)

Tritscher takes slalom, Tomba winless

BEAVER CREEK, Colorado (R) — Austrian Michael Tritscher barely won the World Cup season's first slalom on Sunday as defending cup champion Alberto Tomba was still looking for his first victory three races into the campaign.

Nearly squandering all of the lead he carved after the first run, Tritscher finally prevailed with a time of 1:35.29 to narrowly beat hard-charging Sebastian Amiez of France, timed in 1:35.32.

The slalom is Tomba's specialty but the Italian again struggled with his lagging conditioning and the Colorado altitude.

Tomba made it to the podium only when Michael Von Gruenigen of Switzerland, following a videotape review by the jury a half-hour after the race ended, was disqualified from his apparent third-place finish for missing a gate.

Tomba was timed in 1:35.45, remarkable when one considers that he believes himself two or three weeks away from reaching his potential.

Kjetil Andre Amundt led a Norwegian sweep of the next two positions. Temme Lasse Kjus took over the early lead in the overall standings with his fifth-place finish, coupled with the disqualification of Von Gruenigen, who had won the two previous giant slalom races with Kjus finishing second.

Tritscher, who had won just twice before in a 10-year career, hailed this as his most dramatic victory after nearly losing all of his first-run lead over Amiez, who had been no better than 10th.

"This was just wild, to be strating last knowing that the man I had to beat had started so long before," Tritscher said of the continuing discord over the reverse-30 start order. "This was such a demanding course, such incredibly firm snow."

Tritscher last season had to wait almost to the end to win a Slalom at Furano, Japan, a race in which Tomba fell.

"This time it was much more satisfying with Tomba on the podium, I felt I had achieved more," he said.

وزارة الاشغال والاسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Invitation for Bids (IFB)
Contract Identification No. 224/95
Central Rehabilitation & Protection of Exposed Farm Turnout Assemblies
World Bank Loan No.: 381B - Jo
World Bank Loan Name: ASTSUP

1- The Government of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development toward the cost of Agriculture Sector Technical Support Project and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the contract for Rehabilitation and Protection of Exposed Farm Turnout Assemblies, loan No. 381B - Jo. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries and local contractors who are classified in the first class in the field of water supply and sewerage.

2- The Ministry of Water and Irrigation / Jordan Valley Authority invites sealed bids from eligible bidders under the World Bank guidelines for the supplying and installation of pressure regulator, gate valve, flow limiting device, and flow meter. Also the work consists of manufacturing and installation of steel protection box.

3- Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman P.O.Box 1220, Tel. (+) 962 6 606 757 Fax (+) 962 6 606 751 of a non-refundable fee JD 250 or its equivalent in a freely convertible currency, for each set interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.

4- Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 calendar days after bid opening and must be accompanied by a minimum bid security of 3% of the price or its equivalent in a convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the following address:

Ministry of Public Works & Housing
Government Tenders Directorate
Al-Salt Street
Amman P.O.Box 1220. Tel.(+) 962 6 606 757, Fax(+) 962 6 606 751.

5- Qualified domestic suppliers may be eligible to receive a margin of preference of 15% or the applicable customs duty, whichever ever is lower in bid evaluation.

6- Schedule and programme of the invitation for bids

a. The tender document available as of Tue. 21st Nov. 1995.

b. Site visit will take place on Mon. 4th Dec. 1995. (The contractor representatives will be gathered at 8 a.m. in Irrigation Directorate near Shmeisani Hospital).

c. Pre-bid conference will be held on Tue. 5th Dec. 1995. (in the meeting room in the Ministry of Water & Irrigation).

d. Date of submission of tenders is Sat. 20th Jan. 1996 bids shall be submitted 1:00 p.m. Jordan local time.

Eng. Nasir Madadha
Director General

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Please contact Eng. Hassan Halabi, Tel: 671946, from 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 - 6:00 p.m.

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A haven for your senses is what we have prepared for you!

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Coventry salvage point at QPR

LONDON (R) — Coventry captain Dion Dublin earned his side a point with a 75th minute header to force a 1-1 draw against Queens Park Rangers in an English Premier League match on Sunday.

QPR went ahead through Simon Barker after 37 minutes and seemed to be heading for the three points until Dublin struck, giving QPR's American goalkeeper Juergen Sommer no chance with his powerful close-range bullet header.

It was Dublin's third goal in three games but Coventry have still won only one league match this season — at home to Manchester City almost three months ago.

QPR haven't won in the league since the end of September.

NFL RESULTS

NEW YORK (R) — Results of National Football League games played Sunday:

Atlanta	31	St. Louis	6
Carolina	27	Arizona	7
Detroit	24	Chicago	17
Pittsburgh	49	Cincinnati	31
Green Bay	31	Cleveland	20
Indianapolis	24	New England	10
Philadelphia	28	NY Giants	19
Tampa Bay	17	Jacksonville	16
Seattle	27	Washington	20
Denver	30	San Diego	27
Minnesota	43	New Orleans	24
Buffalo	28	NY Jets	26

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Eight killed, 16 injured as Taliban jet bomb Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — At least eight civilians were killed and 16 injured when a Taliban militia jet bombed a residential area in central Kabul Monday, hospital and army sources said.

The Taliban aircraft dropped two 500 kilogrammes explosives on the Shahnew area of the besieged Afghan capital at around midday (0730 GMT), hitting six houses, witnesses and military officials said.

There was no independent confirmation of who was responsible for the bombing.

Four children — including a two-year-old boy and his 12-year-old sister — who had been inside their family homes when the raid began, were among the dead, hospital officials said.

"Two of the dead children were a brother and a sister. This has destroyed their family," a doctor at the Wazir Akbar Khan hospital told AFP.

Local residents and soldiers began picking through the craters and rubble left by the blasts in search of victims and survivors immediately after the air raid.

One man, supported by his neighbours, screamed and cried as rescuers dug into the

pile of debris that was once his home, looking for the man's three children who were buried under tonnes of earth and masonry.

Women wailed and moaned in the remains of a nearby house as they awaited news of their families, also buried under one of the six homes destroyed by the powerful bombs.

Rescuers warned that the death toll could still rise substantially as it was not known how many people had been inside the obliterated houses.

The other known dead included two women and a man who were either in or near the houses struck in the raid, hospital sources and witnesses said.

Among the 16 injured were two men in serious condition and a 17-year-old youth who suffered a shrapnel wound to his side.

"We were in our house when my young daughter said she could see a jet in the sky," the boy's father said.

"Before we knew what had happened a bomb had hit our house and there was debris and dust everywhere," he added.

The massive bombs left gaping craters where family

houses had stood just minutes before in an area which has no major military installations or bases, apart from a small police station and a minor unfortified army post.

However, government artillery is located on a hill almost a kilometre away.

"This was a random and deliberate Taliban attack on a civilian area which was prompted by their frustration at not being able to hold their advances to the east of Kabul," army Commander Abdul Hafiz Fakhri told AFP.

The bombing came as the Taliban and the state army battled it out on the frontlines to the east of Kabul, which has been under siege from the Islamic militants for the past month.

The militia seized eight kilometres of government territory in a surprise attack Thursday, but were later repulsed from most of the captured area. Heavy fighting has been underway in the area for five days.

The raid was the first in about a month, and was the first in many months to have claimed civilian casualties, hospital staff said.



EXCELLING STUDENTS: Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday distributes meritorious certificates to excellent students from the Jordan University of Science and Technology in Irbid and a number of

personalities who had made donations to the university's students fund. The prime minister earlier met with the university president and board and inspected the university's different departments (Petra photo)

Rabin's assassin appears in court, tells judge 'justice was done'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The smiling assassin of Yitzhak Rabin told a court on Monday that justice had finally been done when he gunned down the prime minister at a peace rally here after several failed past attempts.

Yigal Amir, 25, said he had acted alone but on behalf of all Jewish people and tried to claim he was a political prisoner by saying Mr. Rabin was an "illegal" Jewish leader.

But he was cut off sharply by Judge Dan Arbel who said he refused to hear political speeches in the Tel Aviv courtroom and remanded him in custody until Nov. 30 for police investigations to be completed.

Mr. Amir also coolly admitted he had tried several times in the past to kill Mr. Rabin.

"I made other attempts to murder the prime minister. I read in a paper that I did not act alone. Physically I was perhaps alone, but the finger which pulled the trigger was not just mine."

"It belonged to all the people who for 2,000 years dreamed of their land, to all those thousands of Jews whose blood flowed for this land for generations past who wanted to come to live here."

Mr. Amir was caught immediately after the attack and seven other people are also in detention after police announced the arrest of a new suspect on Monday.

Police spokesman Eric Bar Chen said the unidentified 24-year-old was also a student at the Bar Ilan university where Mr. Amir studied law and would appear before a court on Tuesday.

Mr. Amir was led into court amid tight security with 10 anti-terrorist police agents armed with M-16 and Galil rifles in the court, along with

six court security agents and four border guards.

He told how he revisited the place now renamed Yitzhak Rabin for a chilling police reconstruction on Thursday.

When he saw small piles of stones placed in the prime minister's memory "it reminded me of the acts carried out by fanatics."

"This country is full of fanatics. I had the feeling that justice had finally been done."

"When Rabin saw these types of memorials he said 'These are the victims of peace' referring to memorials placed after anti-Israeli attacks by Palestinian mili-

tants. It is a Jewish tradition to place small piles of stones in memory of a loved one."

Throughout the hearing his mother Shlomo bent his head and murmured prayers, and at the end of the hearing stammered: "I am sorry, I'm sorry."

But in contrast Mr. Amir, who has not voiced one word of regret since the assassination on Nov. 4, smiled and gestured to his parents and his sister.

Judge Arbel said: "The police gave me a new list of people implicated in this affair. The suspect denies nothing. He admits the assassination of Rabin as well as other failed attempts. The police ask to complete the inquiry to see if other suspects had links with the assassin or the earlier attempts."

Police representative Arieh Silbermann told the court: "Yigal Amir is suspected of murder, attempted murder, possessing illegal weapons and conspiracy."

He stressed that investigations into the assassination were almost complete but a few points still needed to be cleared up.

Asked by a journalist about reports that he acted with suspected Shin Bet informer Avshalom Raviv, Mr. Amir said: "I don't care, all I know is that I acted alone."

Police are convinced the assassination was plotted by an extremist right-wing cell, and Israel has been rocked by revelations that Mr. Raviv, the head of the Eyal group to which Mr. Amir was also linked, was an informer for the security services.

A state inquiry on Sunday began to hear evidence from hundreds of witnesses to investigate the security failures surrounding the assassination.

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British embassy received warning before anti-U.S. blast

RIYADH (AFP) — The British embassy said here Monday it had received a warning from an unknown militant group several months before last week's bombing of a U.S. military building in Saudi Arabia.

The message was similar to one sent to the U.S. embassy by the Islamic Movement for Change calling on American and British soldiers to leave the country by July 1995, a British embassy spokesman said.

Western diplomats said the U.S. embassy received the threats by fax in April and June. "We have received a similar fax," according to the British spokesman who asked not to be named.

The embassy took into account the threats during a regular security review earlier in the year, he said with-

out providing details. "We have taken extra precautions."

There are estimated 30,000 British citizens living in Saudi Arabia, but the embassy declined to comment on Britain's military presence in the kingdom.

Britain sent thousands of troops to Saudi Arabia during the U.S.-led military build-up to free Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in 1991 and has since taken part in allied missions to bar Iraqi aircraft from flying over southern Iraq.

The spokesman said the fax was the first and only time the embassy had heard from the Islamic Movement for Change.

Despite the threats, the U.S. embassy did not step up protection of U.S. buildings "because of the high level of

security" in Saudi Arabia, a Western diplomat said.

The Islamic Movement for Change and another little-known group, Tigers of the Gulf, have claimed responsibility for the Nov. 13 attack on the U.S. building used to train the Saudi National Guard.

The Egyptian opposition newspaper Al Shaab reported later that the "Ansar Allah" (Partisans of God) also said it carried out the attack of the U.S. Office for the Programme Manager of the Saudi Arabian National Guard.

The blast killed five Americans and one Indian and wounded up to 60 people.

Since the bombing, both the United States and Britain have warned their citizens to take extra security precautions.

Beshir: Uganda, neighbours conspiring against Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudanese President Omar Al Beshir on Monday again accused Uganda and unnamed "neighbouring" countries of conspiring against his regime and backing the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Speaking at the opening session of the Sudanese parliament, Mr. Beshir said his government has "neutralised" the rebellion on the battlefield and was now setting out a programme for peace.

But he complained that "those who oppose stability and peace in Sudan are attempting to rescue the rebellion from natural and objective death," and spoke of a "conspiracy engineered inside Uganda supported by neighbouring and distant nations."

General Beshir warned that his country would defend its territories and would

"deal a lesson to anyone who attempts to violate those territories."

Earlier this month Sudan accused Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni of "plotting against our Islamic orientation" when the two leaders met in Cairo on Nov. 2, charges Mr. Mubarak dismissed as "completely untrue."

Khartoum claims Uganda sent troops into Sudan to back southern rebels there in an offensive against the government that began in late October.

Uganda broke diplomatic ties with Sudan in April, accusing it in turn of supporting a Christian militant group seeking to topple Mr. Museveni. Eritrea has also severed ties with Khartoum.

Egypt's relations are likewise strained with Sudan, which it has accused of back-

ing an assassination attempt on Mr. Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in June.

Despite his claims of having "neutralised" rebel forces, the Sudanese head of state also reiterated his government's willingness for peace talks with the SPLA within the framework of a two-year-old initiative sponsored by the East Africa Inter-Governmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD) and affiliated Western nations, including the United States and Britain.

In the wide-ranging speech, broadcast on radio and television, General Beshir said his country's relations with the Gulf states and with the European Union have improved, pointing to the signing this year of bilateral cooperation agreements with five EU nations.

Libya answers British questions on IRA but sanctions to continue

LONDON (R) — Britain said on Monday Libya had answered a series of questions about its links with the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in what it called a positive step towards complying with United Nations resolutions to renounce terrorism.

But the Foreign Office said Britain remained committed to sanctions until Libya complies with all U.N. demands — including handing over two Libyans accused of the 1988 bombing of a Pan American airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland.

The answers clarified earlier information given by Tripoli about arms and explosives British intelligence say Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi secretly shipped to the IRA in the mid-1980s.

The questions were relayed to Libya via the United Nations.

The Foreign Office said

there were gaps in the new answers, "but when the Libyan disclosures are taken in their entirety, we are satisfied that they have largely met our expectations."

Britain is keen to draw a line under the row over Libyan links to the IRA — which fought a 25-year war to oust Britain from Northern Ireland but declared a ceasefire 15 months ago in a bid to join talks to agree a peace settlement.

British officials hope that closing the file on the IRA affair could bring London and Tripoli closer to resolving the impasse over the Lockerbie bombing in which 270 people died.

"We acknowledge that the Libyan readiness to answer our questions is a positive step towards its implementation of the relevant (U.N.) Security Council resolutions, in particular towards its renunciation of terrorism, a

path which we hope it will continue to follow," the Foreign Office said.

But it added in a statement: "Libya has answered our questions in the context of just one of a number of demands placed on it by the post-Lockerbie Security Council resolutions."

"We remain committed to U.N. sanctions against Libya until such time as Libya has complied with those demands, in particular that it must surrender those accused of the Lockerbie bombing for trial in Scotland."

The U.N. Security Council in 1992 demanded that Libya hand over two intelligence officers accused of the Lockerbie bombing and take all steps it could to eliminate terrorism.

The United States and Britain have issued arrest warrants for the two Libyans accused of the bombing.

Ekeus: Security Council united on Iraq Aziz, Bouchard discuss sanctions

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz held talks with a senior French diplomat on Baghdad's relations with the U.N. Security Council, the Iraqi news agency INA reported on Monday.

INA said Denis Bouchard, who is head of the Middle East section at the French Foreign Ministry, arrived in Baghdad on Sunday.

"The meeting, conducted in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, dwelt on the exchange of viewpoints on Iraq's relations with the Security Council," INA said of Mr. Bouchard's talks with Mr. Aziz.

The official agency gave no further details. France advocates lifting the ban on Iraqi oil exports once Baghdad meets United Nations demands on the annihilation of its weapons of mass destruction.

Under the terms ending the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait, the oil embargo cannot be eased or lifted until Iraq meets all U.N. demands on weapons.

U.N. officials in Baghdad say Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on Iraq, is due in Baghdad in a couple of

weeks for another round of talks on Iraqi disarmament. They also said at least two teams of U.N. inspectors would visit Iraq soon to check Iraqi data which exceeds 600,000 pages of written material.

They say the latest information provided by Iraq following the August defection of Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan to Jordan is bound to delay the completion of their work.

Meanwhile in Kuwait, Mr. Ekeus said the Security Council renewed tough Gulf war sanctions this month because Baghdad failed to comply fully with demands on dangerous weapons, the Kuwait news agency said.

Rolf Ekeus was speaking on arrival in Kuwait on Sunday. He is on a tour of Gulf Arab states to brief the region's leaders about Iraqi disarmament, the agency said late Sunday.

Mr. Ekeus said the council had decided on Nov. 8 to maintain sanctions because it considered Baghdad had failed to cooperate fully with ceasefire resolutions passed after the Gulf war requiring the dismantling of weapons of mass destruction.

"It appears all 15 members (of the Security Council) were in agreement — there was no room or space for saying that Iraq has fulfilled its obligations and therefore there were no discussions on easing the sanctions at that stage," Mr. Ekeus was quoted as saying.

"No state considered there was enough motivation to take a step in that direction."

In a report to the Security Council last month, Mr. Ekeus said Baghdad had gravely misled his inspectors and had developed far more powerful arms than previously thought.

Some of his new information came from documents Iraq handed over after Lt. Gen. Hassan defected to Jordan.

"There is a consensus in the Security Council that the sanctions cannot be lifted if the special commission is not ready to report to it about reasonable fulfilments of the obligations under the weapons part of the resolutions," the Kuwaiti agency quoted Mr. Ekeus as saying.

A Gulf war ceasefire resolution links the oil export embargo to compliance on weapons while Iraq's adher-

ence to other council demands is tied to embargoes of imports to Iraq.

The United States, echoing Kuwait demands, wants a wider interpretation of the oil embargo terms, saying Iraq must show a pattern of compliance on a range of U.N. demands, including honouring human rights issues such as the return of hundreds of Kuwaitis believed still held in Iraq.

In another development Monday, Iraq and Kuwait held talks on the border aimed at tracing people who went missing during Baghdad's 1990-91 occupation of the Gulf state.

The meeting, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, would probably last for two days, a U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) spokesman said.

The delegations were meeting at UNIKOM's headquarters at the Iraqi border town of Umm Qasr, the spokesman said by telephone.

Kuwait-based diplomats from Saudi Arabia, the United States, Britain and France also attended the meeting.

COLUMN 1000000

China has 1 million rich, 70 million poor

BEIJING (R) — China has more than one million millionaires and 70 million people who live below the poverty line, the official people's daily newspaper said Monday. More than 70 million Chinese, mostly farmers, live below the poverty line, earning less than 300 yuan (\$36) per year, the paper quoted official statistics as saying. However, one million people have assets of more than one million yuan (\$120,500), it said. China has unveiled an ambitious plan to bring 10 million out of poverty in each of the next seven years. By 1993, people with a high income accounted for two per cent of China's population of 1.2 billion, the newspaper said. It did not say how high their income was but their savings made up 30 per cent of total individual savings of urban residents. China collected a record 10.09 billion yuan (\$1.2 billion) in individual income tax in the first 10 months of 1995, an 82.2 per cent rise from the previous year, the newspaper said.

Wives quarrel over husband's corpse

MANILA (AFP) — Two women, each claiming to be the rightful wife of a dead man, have put authorities of a Manila hospital here in a quandary over who should get the corpse, newspapers reported here Monday. Myrna Pasos, 42 and Josefina Pasos, 35, both showed up at the Mary Johnston Hospital with marriage certificates proving that Ben Pasos, 46, who died of a heart attack here last week, was their husband. Hospital officials were quoted as saying they were more inclined to give the remains to the younger wife, since she was the one who brought the man to the hospital. The older wife, wed in 1979, would like the body buried in the northern suburb of Malabon, while the younger one, wed in 1989, hopes to take the remains home to the northern province of Pangasinan.

Woman fired for swearing wins compensation

AUCKLAND (R) — A New Zealand woman fired from her job in a cafe because her language was too coarse for patrons from a rugby team won 6,240 New Zealand dollars (\$4,050) in damages from an employment court. Judge Barrie Travis said in his verdict that Carol Waugh had admitted swearing in the kitchen of an establishment called the cafe, the bar and the casino. The rugby team, which used the cafe regularly, told the manager they would take their custom elsewhere if Waugh's bad language continued.

Hysteria rises over bloodsucking beast

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (R) — Reports of a blood-sucking beast which is said to rip the organs from animals has struck fear in this Caribbean island. The beast, known in Spanish as "Chupacabras" or goat sucker, is blamed for the deaths of dozens of turkeys, rabbits, goats, cats, dogs and even horses and cows, according to police in this U.S. territory of 3.6 million people. In the latest reported incident, the beast was said to open the window of a house in the city of Caguas, destroy a stuffed teddy bear and leave a puddle of slime and a piece of rancid white meat on the windowsill.